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OPINION METER

This week's poll:

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest and 5 the highest, how would you rate your level of optimism for the new year?

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INSIDE

NATION



The White House seals accord with Republicans to neutralize the fiscal cliff.

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FOCUS



The warning came from North Korea's Kim Jong Un who sees his nation under siege.

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Kim Kardashian and Kanye West are feeling lucky about their first child.

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IN SIGNING \$190.8M PPA DEAL

AG opinion: Fitial not liable

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Attorney General Joey P. San Nicolas issued an opinion Monday declaring that Gov. Benigno R. Fitial is not liable for any cause of action related to his signing of the controversial no-bid \$190.8-million power purchase agreement.

San Nicolas said that Fitial cannot be faulted because he reasonably relied on the certification of then attorney general Edward T. Buckingham that the power purchase agreement was proper as to form and capacity.

"The governor should be able to rely on the advice of the Commonwealth's highest legal officer and cannot be faulted when the attorney general is mistaken," San Nicolas pointed out.

He determined, however, that Fitial did not have the authority, pursuant to

Executive Order 2012-07, to enter into the power purchase agreement with Saipan Development LLC.

He said the agreement would not address any of the grounds for the finding that the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. was faced with an immediate disaster.

"Suspending CUC's procurement regulations was not necessary for CUC to enter a PPA that will neither take effect nor show results for a number of years," San Nicolas added.

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San Nicolas

World looks to 2013 after violence, economic woes



AP

Fireworks explode over the London Eye in central London, as part of the New Year celebrations Tuesday, Jan. 1, 2013.

By JENNIFER PELTZ and VERENA DOBNIK
ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK (AP)—As the world rang in 2013 with spectacular fireworks displays and showers of confetti, the specter of economic uncertainty and searing violence dimmed some festivities and weighed on the minds of revelers hoping for a better year.

"With all the sadness in the country, we're looking for some good changes in

See WORLD on Page 4

NEW PRICE

Due to the higher cost of production, the *Saipan Tribune's* newsstand price will go up to 75 cents effective Jan. 2, 2013.



BOOK DONATION

Garapan Elementary School students and teachers hold up the books donated by the Saipan Marianas Lions Club to the school. The book is a collaborative effort of Saipan Marianas Lions Club and the Washougal Lions Club in Washington state.

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Local

SCS hands out generous prizes in raffle



CLARISSA V. DAVID

The Customer Appreciation Raffle 2012 is Saipan Computer Services management and staff's way of thanking its customers for their support and patronage for 18 years.

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Saipan Computer Services and Ideal Signs gave away exciting prizes, including a home theater showcase, during its Customer Appreciation Raffle on New Year's Eve at its Garapan office along Beach Road.

The raffle accumulated close to a thousand entries from customers who received one raffle ticket for every \$25 cash purchase during the promo period from Nov. 19 to Dec. 29.

Lucky customers received minor prizes consisting of SCS and Ideal Signs memorabilia and SanDisk 8GB flash drives.

The major prize winners were Carol Aguon, fifth prize winner with ticket no. 376, who took home a Toshiba 1-terabyte portable HDD; Elise Miller, fourth prize, ticket no. 308, Sony Cybershot Digital Camera; Lillian Deleon Guerrero, third prize, ticket no. 296; and Joe Magday, 2nd prize, ticket no. 280, a new Apple iPad with Retina Display.

Dandan resident Kimberly C. Reyes was the luckiest of them all, winning both the first prize of a Nikon D3100 still/video SLR camera and the much coveted grand prize of a home theater showcase that included a 47" LG full HD LED Tru-Motion TV, a Blu-Ray system, and six

wireless surround speakers.

All winners were verified by Gary Bernardo of Burger & Comer, P.C.

Reyes said in a phone interview that she was very surprised to find out that she won the top two prizes for the raffle, saying that their new gadgets are a great New

A long-time customer, Reyes vowed to continue patronizing SCS for its excellent customer service.

SCS general manager Jerry P. Tiu said this year's Customer Appreciation Raffle is the first for their management, which has operated SCS and Ideal Signs since 1994.



CLARISSA V. DAVID

Saipan Computer Services general manager Jerry P. Tiu, right, draws the grand prize winner for the company's Customer Appreciation Raffle at their Garapan office on Dec. 31.

Tiu said the raffle is their way of letting the public know that they remember all their support and patronage through the years, allowing them to be remain in business for almost two decades.

"We're overwhelmed by the show of support and participation in this event. We just really want to say thank you not just from the management but also from our 15-member crew," Tiu told *Saipan Tribune*.

With computers becoming more and more indispensable, Tiu said they have the responsibility to keep up with the changing trends in technology, the competitiveness of prices, and quality service that is synonymous to SCS.

"Their being with us is a validation of our objective and motto, 'Service beyond the sale,'" he said.

Tiu said they plan to offer a similar or even a bigger raffle draw this year.



CLARISSA V. DAVID

Lisa Marcelo-Gomez, right, of Saipan Computer Services reads the winning ticket number for the Customer Appreciation Raffle on New Year's Eve.



A weekly update from the Marianas Visitors Authority
Tourism is everybody's business.

6th Annual Marianas Coffee Trail Run January 26, 2013



The 6th Annual Marianas Coffee Trail Run returns on Jan. 26, 2013, featuring some of the most scenic trails in Saipan. The 15K trail run and 10K short

course take participants through a variety of Saipan's island ecosystems, from the flat coastal areas of Garapan where the race begins, through the foothills of Mount Tapachao, and on up and around Tapachao peak itself, before heading back down again to the finish. Incredible vistas of the Saipan lagoon, rich tropical jungle flora and fauna, and both the wild coffee plantations of the Japanese colonial period, and the newer plantations of the Marianas Coffee Company, are just a few of the highlights to be had along this challenging course.

Start time is 6:30 a.m. Registration forms for the event are available at the Marianas Visitors Authority (MVA) office in San Jose or online at www.mymarianas.com. Late registration can be made on the day of the race at the American Memorial Park at 5:30 a.m. Registration fees are \$10.00 for children ages 12 and under, \$15.00 for athletes ages 13-18 years old, and \$25.00 for participants ages 19 and older. A late registration fee of an additional \$10.00 will apply after Thursday, Jan. 24, 2013. Walkers are encouraged to participate in the 10K short course.

Awards will be presented for first, second, and third place in male and female divisions. All participants will receive a finisher's t-shirt, certificate of participation, Marianas Coffee, and an invitation to the awards banquet following the race at the Micro Beach Pavilion at 11:30 a.m.

Joining the MVA as race co-sponsors are Marianas Coffee Company, KFC Triathlon Club Japan, TEAM PDI, and Northern Marianas Athletics for making the event possible. For more information on the Marianas Coffee Trail Run, contact Ed Diaz at the MVA at telephone 670-664-3200/1 or via email at ediaz@mymarianas.com.



This Tourism Tuesday space is provided by Saipan Tribune

ASNMC takes no position on no-confidence vote vs Hart

Group offers free computer courses

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
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REPORTER

The Saipan Building and Fixing Computer Users Group has announced its lineup of computer courses that the group will offer this 2013.

The Basic Electronics class will be conducted by instructors Zaldy Quebral and Mar Masilungan on Feb. 3 from 9am to noon.

On the same day from 1pm to 4pm, Jousel Regilme will be teaching Basic Computer Operations 1.

The succeeding course, Basic Computer Operations 2, will be taught by Amado Tumbaga, Carlos Cortez, and Esper Jaro on March 24 from 1pm to 4pm.

The Building & Fixing Computers class will be conducted by Mar Masilungan and Edmin Elayda on May 19, from 5:30pm to 8:30pm.

Mar Masilungan, volunteer instructor and founding chair of SBFCUG, said the schedule for two other courses, Basic Electricity by Rolan Vicencio and Angel Deliva as well as Networking by Masilungan, will be finalized and announced soon.

All classes will be held at Nestor Tumaquip's residence in San Vicente, which serves as the group's headquarters and classroom, added Ma-

silungan.

Founded in December 2006, SBFCUG volunteered to continue the computer training program of the Philippine Consulate General on Saipan and the Philippine Overseas Labor Office, which shut down after its last day on Oct. 31.

Masilungan said SBFCUG "never stopped their volunteer work in extending help to the Filipino community by sharing their knowledge."

After the consulate's closure, however, the group decided to open the program to anyone interested, regardless of citizenship.

SBFCUG only asks for \$1 per session per student, and this fee covers the class' utility consumption.

Enrollment form for any of the available classes may be downloaded from the group's website, www.sbf-c-users-group.org.

The group also continued the review classes for the U.S. Certified Technician Examination. Masilungan said an additional 11 computer training graduates recently became certified, bringing to 65 the total number of individuals who have successfully passed the examination since 2006.

To sign up for the training or for more information, email tropicmar@gmail.com.

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

If members of the Northern Marianas College Faculty Senate found an ally in its counterpart Staff Senate on its no-confidence vote against NMC president Sharon Y. Hart, one organization has refused to take a stand on the issue.

Alex Shen, honorary Board of Regents member and president of the Associated Students of NMC, told *Saipan Tribune* during Friday's board meeting that the student community has decided not take any sides and will remain neutral on the issue.

"ASNMC will not take any stand or position on this issue because we wanted to remain

neutral. ASNMC is supportive of both the faculty and the president and we believe this matter will soon be resolved," said Shen, pointing out that his role is to build a bridge of communication between the school and the students to improve understanding and cooperation.

Shen said the ASNMC hadn't had a chance to call for its own assembly since the Dec. 14 faculty assembly that issued a no-confidence vote against Hart. He said that, although many students are aware of the issue, this does not concern them so much.

"Very few of the students

I've talked to were concerned of the effect this issue may have on our accreditation status...but as far as majority of the students [are concerned], they are not sure whether or not the concern raised against the president is true or not," he said.

In previous years, ASNMC took positions on several issues involving the college and the students. In 2010, the group supported then college president Dr. Carmen Fernandez, who was also issued a no-confidence vote by faculty members. ASNMC also used to conduct surveys and studies relating to matters

that affect students.

As a president of the student organization, Shen plans to call an assembly—probably in spring—to discuss with students the issue surrounding the no-vote confidence but he said he wants to discuss it with an identified solution to the problem.

Last Friday, the Board of Regents ruled that the vote made by faculty was invalid due to a lack of quorum. However, the board gave the Faculty Senate 10 days to confirm its numbers and that may change the board's decision yet.

All concerns raised by the faculty in its "evidence report" were accepted by the board, which will conduct a two-day internal review this week.



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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Members of the Saipan Marianas Lions Club and students hold up the assorted books that the organization donated to Garapan Elementary School.

WORLD

From Page 1

2013," Laura Concannon, of Hingham, Mass., said as she, her husband, Kevin, and his parents joined hundreds of thousands of people who celebrated the new year in Times Square on Monday.

Matias Dellanno, 37, of Buenos Aires, Argentina, stood in the middle of the square with his wife and 3-year-old son. His eyes caught the multicolored lighting illuminating the square just before midnight.

"I feel a completely new hope for 2013," he said. "It can't be any worse than last year, when my business lost clients. It was a rough year for everyone. The new year has to be better!"

■■■■
VATICAN CITY (AP)—Pope Benedict XVI says he is convinced that peace will prevail in 2013 despite the inequality, terrorism and "unregulated financial capitalism" that afflict the world today.

Benedict celebrated a Mass on Tuesday in St. Peter's Basilica to mark the church's world day of peace. In the front pews were diplomats accredited to the Holy See, who next week will attend the pope's annual address about the plight of the world's poor and its war-torn regions.

In his homily, Benedict said despite today's terrorism, criminality and the inequality between rich and poor he was convinced that the "numerous works of peace, of which the world is rich, are testimony to the innate vocation of humanity to peace."

■■■■
Revelers with New Year's hats and sunglasses boasting "2013" packed the streets in the 35-degree cold to count down the first ball drop in decades without Dick Clark, who died in April and was honored with his name printed on confetti and on one of the crystal panels on the Times Square ball.

Syracuse University student Taylor Nanz, 18, said she and a friend had been standing in Times Square since 1:20 p.m. Monday. They hadn't moved from their spot because "if you leave, you lose your

place," she said.

"It's the first time—and the last time," she said. "Never again."

Security in Times Square was tight, with a mass of uniformed police and plainclothes officers assigned to blend into the crowd. Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly claimed that Times Square would be the "safest place in the world on New Year's Eve," and officers used barriers to prevent overcrowding and checkpoints to inspect vehicles, enforce an alcohol ban and check handbags.

In the state capital of California, a midnight fireworks show was canceled after a fight at a Sacramento restaurant ended with two people fatally shot and three injured.

But in Las Vegas, police and about 300 Nevada National Guard troops kept the night peaceful, with only 13 people arrested. Sin City hosted sold-out concerts featuring Beyoncé, the Red Hot Chili Peppers and the Black Keys, and revelers jammed the Strip to watch as seven hotel-casinos unleashed identical eight-minute rooftop fireworks displays at midnight.

The celebrations on the West Coast took place nearly 24 hours after lavish fireworks displays lit up skylines in Sydney, Hong Kong and Shanghai.

In Myanmar, about 90,000 people gathered in a field to watch a countdown for the first time, according to organizers. The reformist government that took office in 2011 in the country, long under military rule, threw its first public New Year's celebration in decades.

In the United Arab Emirates city of Dubai, multicolored fireworks danced up and down the world's tallest building, the Burj Khalifa.

In Rome, Pope Benedict XVI celebrated with a vespers service in St. Peter's Basilica to give thanks for 2012 and look ahead to 2013. He said that despite all the death and injustice in the world, goodness prevails.

In Russia, spectators filled Moscow's Red Square as fireworks exploded near the Kremlin. In Rio de Janeiro, revelers dressed head-to-toe in white as dictated by Brazilian tradition flooded onto Copacabana beach for a concert.

In London, the chimes of the clock inside the Big Ben tower counted down the final seconds of 2012 and fireworks dazzled the sky above Parliament Square. Streamers shot out of the London Eye wheel and blazing rockets launched from the banks of the River Thames.

But parts of Europe held scaled-back festivities and street parties, the mood was restrained—if hopeful—for a 2013 that is projected to be a sixth straight year of recession amid Greece's worst economic crisis since World War II.

Festivities were canceled across New Delhi, the Indian capital, amid days of mourning and reflection about women's safety after a rape victim died on Saturday.

In Times Square, some revelers checked their cellphones for news of lawmakers' tentative deal to skirt the so-called "fiscal cliff," a combination of expiring tax cuts and spending cuts that threatened to reverberate globally. The U.S. Senate approved a bill to avert the cliff well after midnight, though a vote in the House was pending Tuesday or Wednesday.

The recent elementary school massacre in Newtown, Conn., and the devastation from Superstorm Sandy also mingled amid the memories of 2012.

"This has been a very eventful year, on many levels," Denise Norris said as she and her husband, the Rev. Urie Norris, surveyed the Times Square crowd waiting for the countdown show with Ryan Seacrest as host.

Seacrest remembered Clark and his legacy, saying it was one that would be continued, and that Clark himself had told him: "Seacrest, the show must go on."

Yvonne Gomez, 53, a physician from Grand Forks, N.D., glowed as she and her husband, 63-year-old potato farmer Gregg Halverson, took in the festivities in New York.

"I couldn't begin the new year in a more beautiful way," she said. "I married him two weeks ago and here we are in the middle of Times Square celebrating the new year—two widowers who found each other."

For Elvis Rivera, of Manhattan, who stopped by Times Square to take photos, 2012 a death and job losses in his family. How did he feel about its end?

"Relieved," Rivera said.

Saipan Marianas Lions donates books to GES

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Saipan Marianas Lions Club recently donated assorted books to Garapan Elementary School.

Lions Paul Madriaga, Annamae Adaza, Nel Atalig, Olive Yana, Flor Miranda, and region chair Ladyvir Canape handed two boxes containing 130 books to third grade teacher and fellow Lion Julie Perman.

"The kids were so happy to receive their new books for them to read and to acquire new knowledge," said Madriaga.

He said the book donation is a collaborative effort of Saipan Marianas Lions Club and the Washougal Lions Club in Washington state.

Madriaga said he brought up the idea with Washougal Lions Club president Peter Anderson who liked the idea, initiated a book drive and a pumpkin fundraiser to send the books to Saipan.

He noted that this donation is just the beginning of many more books to be donated to benefit school children as more Lion clubs are interested to send books to the Commonwealth.

DPS commanders, AG meet with Senate EAGI chair

Department of Public Safety commanders held a closed-door meeting on Friday with Senate Committee on Executive Appointments and Government Investigations chair Sen. Francisco Q. Cruz (R-Tinian), who recently expressed his intent to hold an oversight hearing on DPS due to the increasing number of unsolved murders, burglaries, and robberies.

Saipan Tribune learned that Attorney General Joey P. San Nicolas joined the meeting.

San Nicolas confirmed with *Saipan Tribune* that the meeting took place and that Cruz expressed concern about the rising crime rate on the island, particularly burglaries, robberies and arson,

"This is just a proof that Lions can go beyond its border and seek help to benefit our community," Madriaga said.

He revealed that Saipan Marianas Lions also solicited fellow Lions from Guam to buy rubber shoes for underprivileged high school students on island.

According to Madriaga, Lion and PTSA officer Annamae Adaza learned that some students borrow shoes from their teachers so they can attend physical education classes.

He said Guam Lions bought several pairs of rubber shoes that are ready to be shipped to Saipan anytime soon.

The Saipan Marianas Lions Club also sang carols to help raise funds for the cause, added Madriaga.

With 1.35 million members all over the world, Lions Club is the largest service organization that helps meet the needs of local communities across the globe and stands with its motto, "We Serve."

To join or for more information, call membership chair Nel Atalig at 989-3858, secretary Olive Yana at 989-9823 or Madriaga at 287-4501.

and crimes against tourists.

San Nicolas said it was an opportunity for Cruz to hear DPS commanders headed by Criminal Investigation Bureau commander James Guerrero, who brought up their concerns about funding and personnel matter.

During the meeting, the AG said, Cruz pledged his support for DPS.

San Nicolas said he told the senator and commanders that the Office of the Attorney General supports DPS in its quest for financial support.

"It was a good meeting and I look forward to continuing the dialogue with DPS and the Legislature," the AG said. *(Ferdie de la Torre)*

AG

From Page 1

The PPA is among the issues raised in the impeachment resolution against Fitial. The Senate and Reps. Janet Maratita (IR-Saipan) and Ray Yumul (IR-Saipan) are suing Fitial, Buckingham, CUC, and SDLLC, over the PPA signing.

In his five-page opinion, San Nicolas confirmed that Buckingham did indeed certify that the PPA was proper as to form and capacity, and that Fitial signed the PPA in reliance of Buckingham's certification.

"Simply stated, the attorney general was mistaken," San Nicolas said.

He said Fitial is not liable for actions taken in good faith reliance on the AG's representations.

He cited that the CNMI Supreme Court in a precedent case has found that a governor's actions are reasonable, and the governor is entitled to qualified immunity, "insofar as he followed the advice of the attorney general, without regard to whether the attorney general was ultimately correct."

San Nicolas also cited other state Supreme Courts' rulings that jive with this analysis.

He said the AG has a duty to provide

competent legal advice to the governor and the Executive Branch.

"The governor, as a layman, cannot be faulted for the attorney general's mistakes of law," he said.

On the authority issue, San Nicolas said that Fitial's Executive Order 2012-07 and the Disaster Relief Act did not empower the governor to suspend CUC's regulations to enter the PPA.

E.O. 2012-07 identified an "imminent threat of the inability of CUC to provide critical power generation, water, and wastewater services to the CNMI."

The Disaster Relief Act was enacted to, among other things, specify the governor's emergency powers.

Pursuant to the act, the governor is authorized to issue executive orders that have "the force and effect of law when promulgated in accordance with the procedures set forth in the Act."

E.O. 2012-07, San Nicolas said, empowered the governor or his designated agent to exercise the CUC board of directors' powers. However, although Fitial has this power, he is still obligated to follow CUC's procurement regulations to the same extent as the board would be so obligated, San Nicolas said.

"Entering the PPA is not necessary to address any of the specified reasons for the CUC emergency," he added.

Murdered woman's business activities bared

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Investigators are reportedly looking at a business angle among the possible motives for the murder of a San Vicente couple last month.

Jing Liu, a 40-year-old woman who was killed with her husband at their residence in San Vicente, was president, treasurer and secretary of a company that planned to put up a recycling center and engage in apartment rental.

According to sources and documents obtained by *Saipan Tribune*, Liu owned Emalu Trading Ltd. and listed as its address a unit on the 2nd floor of

the Marianas Business Plaza in Susupe.

In Emalu Trading Ltd.'s annual corporation report filed on March 16, 2010, Liu named attorney Gregory J. Koebel as her registered agent.



Liu

Liu described the company's business as recycling (paper and plastic). She claimed to have 1 million in common stocks and paid \$150,000 for her shares.

On Oct. 20, 2010, Emalu Trading issued a board resolution to open a checking account at a bank on Saipan. The resolution named her as the official signer of the checking account and authorized her to issue

checks as payment to all company transactions.

Two days later or on Oct. 22, 2010, Emalu Trading filed articles of amendment with the Registrar of Corporations.

Liu stated in the articles of amendment that the corporation's purpose is to engage in any business such as apartment rental, import/export general merchandise, retail and wholesale general merchandise, tour operation, and other investments or ventures or enterprises.

On Feb. 13, 2012, Emalu Trading's annual report listed Liu as the company's registered agent and named her as president/treasurer/secretary.

In the annual report, Liu described the company's business

as apartment rental, import/export (except garment). She claimed to have 400,000 in common stocks and paid \$400,000 for her shares.

Liu and her 50-year-old hus-

band, Jun Li Yang, were found murdered inside their home in San Vicente on Dec. 8, 2012. Police checked the residence after the couple failed to pick up their

6-year-old son from Mt. Carmel School on Dec. 6, 2012.

The couple's car, a white 2010 Honda CRV, was found abandoned at Micro Beach in Garapan.

Shelli Neal is now handling the case, which was originally assigned to chief prosecutor Peter Prestley.

Romero was last seen boarding a car around 3am on Feb. 5, 2012, near her residence in Garapan. Federal Bureau of Investigation agents found her body two days later in the northernmost building of the former La Fiesta Mall in San Roque.



Romero

'Disposition on Romero murder forthcoming'

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

The murder of bartender Emerita Relata Romero last year is a priority at the Office of the Attorney General, according to Attorney General Joey P. San Nicolas.

San Nicolas told *Saipan Tribune* Monday that they are currently looking into the Romero case.

"A disposition on the Romero

case is forthcoming," said San Nicolas. He did not elaborate.

Sources disclosed that the OAG is expected to file at any time charges against the suspect, an ex-convict.

Sources said the results of DNA testing had already been released to the OAG.

Sources also disclosed that assistant attorney general

Customers owe CUC \$19.4 million

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
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REPORTER

Commonwealth Utilities Corp. chief financial officer Charles Warren disclosed that the cash-strapped utilities firm has about \$19.4 million in outstanding receivables from its active customers—an amount that the said will negatively impact the utilities' operation if it remains uncollected.

As of November 2012, the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. has the highest debt of \$5.3 million, representing consumption of the public hospital way before it was established as an autonomous agency in 2011.

Coming in with the second biggest collectible is the Public School System, whose unpaid obligation total \$3.5 million as of November this year. The central government incurred the next biggest debt of \$2 million.

Warren disclosed that for the government account, the receivable is expected to rise to \$3.7 million once data from the December consumption is finalized. He estimates that the central government will incur a billing of approximately \$1.7 million for December alone.

CUC records show that the agency, which is in state of emergency, also has \$3.6 mil-

lion in receivables from residential customers while commercial customers owe \$3.3 million. The figures are as of November this year.

CUC is a nonprofit organization whose operation relies heavily on the payment of its power, water, and wastewater customers.

Since the utilities corporation is budgeted to have zero profit, Warren said that failure to collect for all services billed results in delayed payments to vendors and eventually a reduction in services and system maintenance.

CUC was again placed under a state of emergency in December due the continuing financial crisis at the agency.



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Happy New Year!

To All CNMI Government Employees, welcome the New-Year 2013 with open arms and with great hope, and a joyous and prosperous year to you and your loved ones! By virtue of the recent enactment of Public Law 17-80, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) is once again, placed back under the Authority of the Civil Service Commission (CSC). Rest assured, the CSC is working diligently and shall comply by fully enforcing such provisions as statutorily stipulated within Public Law 17-80.

As our Mission Statement calls forth:

"The Civil Service Commission is committed to a quality workforce based upon the merit system free from coercion and political influence while responding to the Equal Employment Opportunity principles."

We want to assure all Government Employees that the CSC shall always remain focus in all its deliberations and actions with its Mission Statement in mind. Once Again, on behalf of the Civil Service Commission, its Members and Staff, we wish you all a very, "Happy New Year"!

Mr. Herman R. "HR" DLGuerrero
Chairman
CNMI Civil Service Commission

Health professional licensing board certifies 6 EMTs

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The CNMI's Health Care Professional Licensing Board recently certified six individuals from the Saint Michael's Medical Response Emergency Medical Technicians who are now certified to practice in the Commonwealth.

The Saint Michael's EMTs are the first in the CNMI to receive such certification from the licensing board since the imple-

mentation of the healthcare licensing regulations.

In addition, four of the six certified EMTs have also successfully passed the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technician examination, the highest level of certification that any EMT can attain in the United States. Three more EMTs are gearing up to take the same exam in the next several weeks.

The six newly certified emergency technicians are Derek T.

Hocog, Mike Attao Concepcion, Joseph Torres White, Branson Jay Santos, Briton Tudela Cruz, and Alfred Santos II.

"We are very pleased to announce that our company is the first to fully comply with the stringent requirements imposed by the Health Care Professions Licensing Board," said Francis S. Taimanao, St. Michael's operations chief.

In fact, he said, the first six CNMI EMT licenses ever is-

sued by the licensing board were to St. Michael's EMTs.

"We are proud to have the distinction of having the first EMT license with the number '001' issued to one of our own," he said.

"We would like to extend our deepest appreciation to the board and its administrator, Ms. Florence Sablan, for approving our application to practice so we can continue to provide this essential ser-

vice to the residents of the CNMI," said Saint Michael's director of operations Derek T. Hocog, NREMT, and a CNMI Licensed EMT.

St. Michael's EMTs, drivers, and dispatchers are all certified in cardio-pulmonary resuscitation and emergency vehicle operations. Some EMTs also received additional training in the use of automated external defibrillators. To assist in maintaining these standards,

St. Michael's Medical Response has engaged the services of Jerry Allison, M.D., an ER physician in California to be its medical director.

Allison, a former paramedic himself, conducts continuing education and psychomotor evaluation on all of St. Michael's EMTs on a bi-annual basis. Allison is based in Sacramento, California and is licensed to practice medicine in California and the CNMI.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers at the Saipan International Airport participated in their third annual donation to Toys for Tots.

In 2010, CBP donated to the Marianas Health Services and Karidat Toy Drive; last year they decided to donate to Salvation Army's Toy Drive. This year, with more participation and new ideas as to how to raise funds for the events, CBP donated to both Marianas Health/Karidat and Salvation Army toy drives.

CBP Community Outreach members would normally solicit their colleagues for personal donations for various events such as last summer's Feds Feed Families food drive and their annual participation at the Halloween Trunk or Treat. But beginning with this year's toy drives, the members decided to solicit their colleagues to donate

CBP donates to Toys for Tots



items to be sold at two rummage sales as well as profits from their snack shop at their work-site.

In May of this year, CBP lost one of their own in a tragic drowning accident on Saipan. The late CBP Officer Alan Aninzo was a member of CBP Saipan's Community Outreach team. As a very kind gesture, Aninzo's parents donated a considerable amount of money to this year's Toys for Tots. Aninzo's memory continues to live with those who were close to him and the CBP officers look forward to participating in more community events in the future.

Various fundraising events are being planned at this time. All proceeds will go to community charitable events. (PR)

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers at the Saipan International Airport turn over their toy donations to the Salvation Army.

New Ferrari model cars

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Shell
V-Power



Offer good while supplies last. See store for rules.

Navy medical, dental personnel cap Tinian mission

By LANCE CPL. J. GAGE KARWICK
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

TINIAN, Northern Marianas Islands—Navy medical and dental personnel completed the final day of the medical and dental outreach programs here Dec. 14 during Exercise Forager Fury 2012.

The medical and dental assistance was well received by the Tinian community and is sure to be missed.

"We have seen about 115 medical patients. Dental has had more than 100 extracted teeth, 140 exams, 60 cleanings, and more than a dozen fillings," said Lt. Cmdr. Matthew R. Doubrava, the Senior Medical Officer with Marine Aircraft group 12, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, III Marine Expeditionary Force. "The dentists averaged between 20 to 25 patients a day and they have been working for only 10 days."

The Navy medical personnel's time was not spent solely in the Tinian Health Center. They also spent time out in town advising the community on proper measures to take to reduce their chances of illness.

"We really stressed to the people here the measures they need to take as well as administer to their children," said Lt. Cmdr. Michael Flannery, a general dentist with 11th Dental Company, 3rd Dental Battalion, 3rd Marine Logistics Group, III MEF. "We try to advise them on

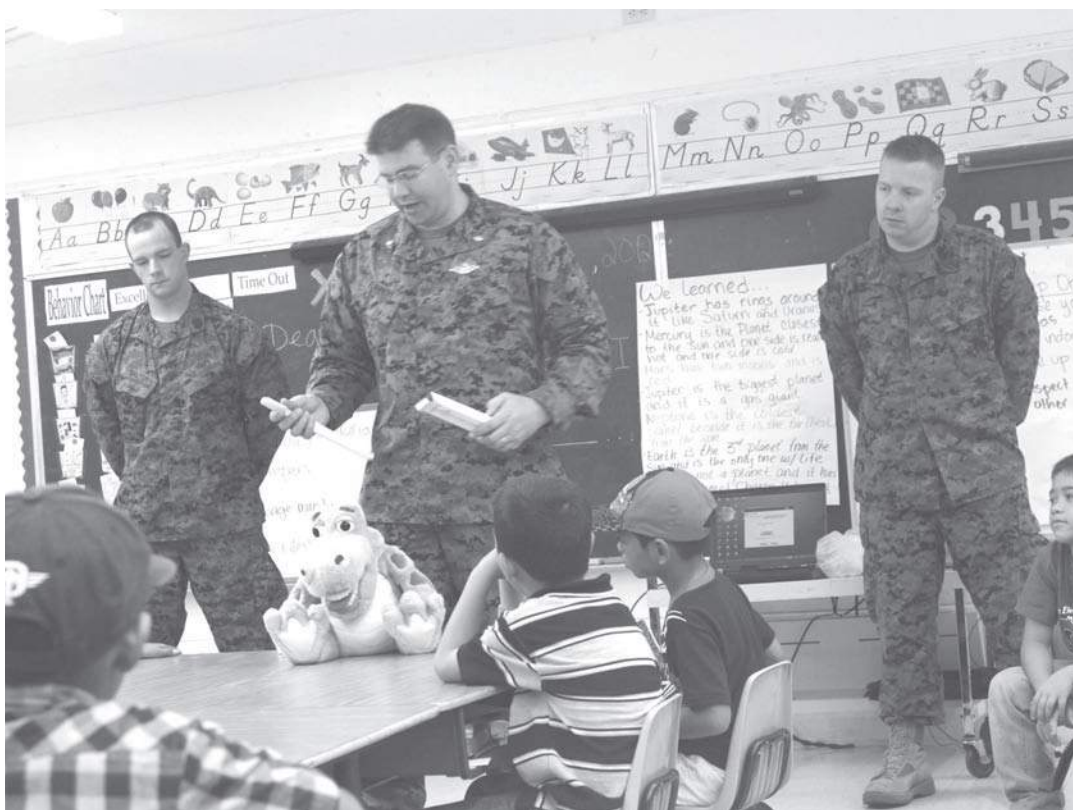
things like how long to brush your teeth, flossing, and brushing twice a day every day."

For the medical personnel here, administering assistance to the people of Tinian is its own reward.

"The people here really appreciate the care they're getting and it really lifts their spirits," said Doubrava. "The fact that we like coming here also makes it extremely enjoyable for us."

The practitioners that come here always want to return to provide further assistance, according to Flannery and Doubrava.

"It has been a great feeling being here and helping out the community," said Flannery. "If people come in with chronic pain that they have been living with for months, then they are extremely grateful that we can assist them and alleviate the pain."



With the end of FF12, the Navy medical personnel are returning to their respective stations and bases, hoping to return and further assist the people of Tinian with their medical needs.

Lt. Cmdr. Michael Flannery, center, and Seamen Joshua M. Dalton, left, and Jeffrey M. Ker give a class on proper dental hygiene at the Tinian Elementary School here Dec. 5. The class was given to further educate children on the importance of oral hygiene at a young age. After the class toothbrushes and floss were passed out to the children. Flannery is a general dentist; Ker is a dental technician; and Dalton is an oral surgical technician with 11th Dental Company, 3rd Dental Battalion, 3rd Marine Logistics Group, III Marine Expeditionary Force.

LANCE CPL. J. GAGE KARWICK

DEQ sets Tank Beach cleanup

The Division of Environmental Quality's Cleanup Brigade will be at it again, picking up trash at Tank Beach this Saturday, Jan. 5, 2013, at 8am.

If you would like to volunteer your time to clean and beautify our island, meet the DEQ representatives on Saturday at the Tank Beach Parking lot at 8am. Volunteers will split into groups and clean until 10am and break for drinks and then continue, if needed.

This month, outstanding brigade volunteers who participated in at least 10 monthly cleanups will receive a brigade cap and those who participated in at least three cleanups will receive

a brigade T-shirt.

Last month's Paupau Beach Cleanup was successful with over 50 volunteers participating. Thanks to, SSS YEA Club, CUC, MINA, MAFEA and other volunteers, about 260 lbs of trash were removed from the beach and properly disposed off.

The DEQ is looking forward to a repeat success this Saturday, so join DEQ's monthly cleanup brigade and "Pick It Up!" Let us work together for the health of our coral reefs and cleanliness of our beaches for everyone to enjoy.

For more information about volunteering, contact the DEQ office at 664-8500/1. (DEQ)

Gregorio Nacu Malit, 73

Gregorio Nacu Malit, a long-time resident and entrepreneur on Saipan, passed away on Dec. 26, 2012, at the age of 73, in Porac, Pampanga, Philippines. Interment was on Sunday, Dec. 30, 2012. He was born on Feb. 15, 1939, in Porac, Pampanga, Philippines.

Malit was one of the contributors and backbone of the CNMI economy since early '70s and had been in the CNMI for some 39 years. Malit completed many construction projects for the CNMI government, Public School System, MIHA, Marianas Visitors Bureau, among others, in addition to numerous houses and establishments he had built and renovated in the CNMI.

Malit also contributed to the beautification of the CNMI through his volunteerism in picking up trash in beaches and tourist places on Saipan and quietly performed community works and provided free community services in the CNMI. He was a friend to many people of the CNMI and Guam.

Mass is offered at 6pm, in San Antonio Church, Saipan, beginning Thursday, Dec. 27, 2012, until Jan. 4, 2013. (PR)

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CNMI GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES 2013 Health Insurance Rates



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- 100% coverage for preventive health services
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*Some conditions apply

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BEEN EXTENDED**



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USCG cutter returns from Pacific patrol



The crew of the Coast Guard cutter *Kukui* participate in regional operations to enhance U.S. and international efforts in the protection of the ecologically and economically valuable fish stocks of the Pacific Ocean.

HONOLULU—The crew of the Coast Guard cutter *Kukui* returned on Dec. 7, 2012, from a 46-day law enforcement patrol where they exercised bilateral agreements and enforced fisheries regulations across the Pacific.

The 50-man crew participated in several significant regional operations to further enhance U.S. and international efforts in the protection of the ecologically and economically valuable fish stocks of the Pacific Ocean.

The crew of *Kukui* began their patrol on Oct. 22. Their mission focused on maritime surveillance operations to detect, deter, and eliminate illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing and other transnational crimes. During the first leg of their trip, the crew conducted three law enforcement

boardings in the high seas and in the American Samoa exclusive economic zone, exercised two bilateral agreements with Samoa and the Kingdom of Tonga, participated in a multinational operation, and visited the three South Pacific ports of Apia, Samoa; Pago Pago, American Samoa; and Vava'u, Tonga.

The crew worked to protect U.S. fisheries by patrolling the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zones of Palmyra Atoll, Jarvis Island, Howland Baker, and Johnston Atoll. Patrols were also conducted to exercise bilateral agreements with Samoa and the Kingdom of Tonga within both countries' exclusive economic zones.

While on another leg of their patrol, the *Kukui* crew conducted a patrol of the Samoan EEZ, in

accordance with a newly signed bilateral agreement. Shipriders from Samoa joined the week-long patrol. Crewmembers also conducted law enforcement training to the Samoan ship riders, sharing law enforcement procedures and best practices.

"It is great to be able to cooperate in this way to protect the ocean environment and the resources that are so important to the people of the Pacific," said Cmdr. Steven Ramassini, commanding officer of the *Kukui*.

The *Kukui* crew completed their Samoa patrol with a visit to Apia, where the Samoan prime minister, Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi, paid a visit to the ship. The prime minister was given an overview of the *Kukui*'s law enforcement capabilities as well as

an introduction to *Kukui*'s aids to navigation mission.

Another achievement for the *Kukui* crew was their participation in Operation Kuru Kuru, a multinational operation orchestrated by the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency. This operation was conducted in cooperation with 17 countries, including all 13 Central Pacific Island nations.

The *Kukui* crew exercised the Tongan bilateral agreement by embarking a Tongan ship rider to patrol that nation's EEZ. *Kukui* crewmembers spent patrol time searching for potential EEZ incursions by vessels not transmitting their location or status in accordance with applicable fisheries regulations.

Another leg of their patrol included domestic fisheries boardings in the American Samoa EEZ and high seas boardings under the authorities established by the Western Central Pacific Fisheries Commission.

The *Kukui*'s patrol served to increase U.S. law enforcement presence in U.S. territories of the South Pacific, increasing legal fishing practices and encouraging safe boating. The patrol also served to bolster U.S.—Samoa and U.S.—Tongan relations, resulting in positive U.S. influence throughout the region. (USCG)

EMO warns of dangerous high surf

The CNMI Emergency Management Office issued yesterday high surf and small craft advisories to warn mariners and beach goers of dangerous surf conditions.

Based on the information it received from the National Weather Service in Tiyan, Guam, EMO said that fresh to strong trade winds and combined seas of 10 to 12 feet will

continue through early next week and maintain hazardous conditions for operators of small craft.

The high surf advisory and small craft advisory will remain in effect until 6am Sunday.

Hazardous surf of 10 to 12 feet is projected to persist along east facing reefs through early next week.

East to northeast winds of 20

knots with frequent gusts of up to 30 knots and combined seas of 10 to 12 feet will produce hazardous conditions for operators of small craft through early next week.

EMO is advising the public to avoid venturing near exposed reefs and beaches, especially those along north and east facing reefs as rip currents are life threatening. (EMO)

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Jan. 2, 2003

UHB recognizes NMI's partnership

Gov. Juan N. Babauta led government officials and schoolteachers during a reception party held onboard the MV Fujimaru Monday night. The ship, which carried over 500 Japanese students for the 17th Annual CNMI-Hokkaido Cultural Broadcasting Co. Japan Student Exchange Program, left Saipan Tuesday afternoon. During the reception party, UHB Managing Director Hideo Tatenoe and Special Events and Promotions Manager Osafumi Tokunaga acknowledged the support and partnership it had cultivated with the Commonwealth for almost two decades.

CPA: Port expansion critical to economic recovery

The Commonwealth Ports Authority, in the late 1990s, had launched a program that sought the expansion of the Port of Saipan container yard, which was envisioned to sustain the agency's self-sufficiency-money-wise. The lack of consensus on how to make the expansion project a reality through the ports authority's acquisition of a parcel of public land adjacent to the seaport, however, proved to be a major stumbling block. The CPA has persistently urged the Marianas Public Lands Authority to transfer the ownership of the property next to the Saipan harbor to the ports authority. But every one of the CPA's requests was met with a solid unenthusiastic response from the MPLA.

Jan. 2, 2005

Minority wants attention on land lease deals

The minority bloc in the House of Representatives is apprehensive of possible "rigged" public consultations on land lease extension initiatives. Minority bloc designated spokesman Rep. Ray Tebuteb said the issue "is extremely sensitive" such that it demands a full-blown public hearing. "We want to clearly see the pulse of the general public, not of a few. The process of public consultation must be fully satisfied. We can't just come up with a ready recommendation here," said Tebuteb. Tebuteb noted that two land lease initiatives were up for passage in the last session. "They were ready to pass it. It was calendared," he said. Minority lawmakers object to the passage of Senate Legislative Initiative 14-3, which seeks to extend land leases of private land from 55 years to 75 years, as well as House Legislative Initiative 14-10, which would extend public land leases from 25 years to 50 years.

Guam privatizes telecom firm for \$150M

The government of Guam and a private company have sealed the \$150-million privatization of the Guam Telephone Authority, the last government-owned local exchange company in the United States. The transaction is also considered as the largest single purchase of a government-owned utility agency on Guam, a development that is seen to open the door for new telecommunications products and services on that island. TeleGuam Holdings LLC disclosed the consummation of its acquisition of GTA, which serves approximately 65,000 telephone access lines and owns cellular assets on Guam.


Jan. 2, 2006

AGO finds loan company operating illegally on Tinian


The Attorney General's Office has sued two persons for allegedly operating an unlicensed consumer loan company on Tinian that over-charged interest on their customers mostly government employees. The CNMI government sued Concepcion M. Manglona and Edward A. Villagomez, owners of EC Payday, for violation of the Consumer Protection Act. In total, the AGO claimed, Manglona and Villagomez over-charged consumers by at least \$65,000 in interest amounts beyond what Commonwealth law sanctions. Assistant attorney general Brian R. Caldwell, in the complaint filed on Friday, asked the Superior Court to rule that the defendants have engaged in trade or commerce within the meaning of the Consumer Protection Act.

Tudela retires after 31 years in govt service

Department of Public Safety Commissioner Santiago F. Tudela announced on Friday his retirement after 31 years of service in the government. Tudela said after serving more than three decades in the department he would surely miss the personnel whom he considers his second family. He is glad and thankful that in his long years of service, he never had to "use" his service firearm, said Tudela during a simple ceremony at the DPS police academy attended by Gov. Juan Babauta, key officials in the department and personnel. The commissioner also thanked the department heads and other government agencies for supporting him during his term at DPS.



Procurement And Supply CNMI Government



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

RFP NO.: RFP13-DEQ-059
 Submission: February 05, 2013 Time: 2:00 p.m.

"Development of a Training Program on National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System, Construction General Permit, Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan for the Division Of Environmental Quality"

The scope of work for this project will be available on or after **January 02, 2013** at the DEQ front desk or can be received electronically by e-mail request to davidrosario@deq.gov.mp


A pre-proposal meeting is scheduled for **January 31, 2013 at 10:30 a.m., local time**, in the 2nd Floor DEQ Conference Room. Questions regarding this project may be faxed to Mr. David B. Rosario at (670) 664-8540 or by e-mail at davidrosario@deq.gov.mp no later than the close of business, **January 25, 2013**.

This is a federally funded project; as such, local preference **is not available**, because its use is prohibited by federal law granting funding for this project.


The government reserves the right to reject any and all bids and proposals, in whole or in part, and to waive any imperfections in the best interest of the commonwealth.

/s/ Frank M. Rabauliman
Director, DEQ

/s/ Herman S. Sablan
Director, P&S



Procurement And Supply CNMI Government



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

RFP NO.: RFP13-DEQ-061
 Submission: January 31, 2013 Time: 2:00 p.m.

"Procurement Of Vessel For Marine Monitoring (Boston Whaler 17') For The Division Of Environmental Quality"

The scope of work for this project will be available on after **January 02, 2013** at the Office of the Director of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base Drive, during regular working hours.

All inquiries should be directed to **Mr. Frank M. Rabauliman**, Director, Division of Environmental Quality at telephone number (670) 664-8500 no later than the close of business, **January 22, 2013**.

This is a federally funded project; as such, local preference **is not available**, because its use is prohibited by federal law granting funding for this project.

The government reserves the right to reject any and all bids and proposals, in whole or in part, and to waive any imperfections in the best interest of the commonwealth.

/s/ Frank M. Rabauliman
Director, DEQ

/s/ Herman S. Sablan
Director, P&S

61st Operation Christmas Drop wraps up in Pacific

By DONNA MILES

AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE

WASHINGTON—The world's longest-running humanitarian mission came to a close on Dec. 18, 2012, as U.S. military members and volunteers delivered more than 39,000 pounds of aid and holiday cheer to Pacific islanders during Operation Christmas Drop.

This year marked the 61st anniversary of the mission, providing support to more than 30,000 islanders from Chuuk, Palau, Yap, the Marshall Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, officials reported.

Airmen from the 36th Wing

at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, as well as family members and local volunteers, and airmen from the 36th Airlift Squadron at Yokota Air Base, Japan, kicked off the mission Dec. 11, officials reported. Carefully preparing packages of toys, clothing, fishing equipment, sporting goods, food items, tools, and other goods, they airdropped them from C-130 Hercules aircraft to 54 islands.

The mission, the oldest of U.S. Pacific Command's outreach activities across the Asia-Pacific region, dates back to 1952. An aircrew from the 54th Weather Reconnaissance Squadron, based at the time in

Guam, noticed islanders waving to them as they flew over the Micronesian atoll of Kapin-gamarangi. The crewmembers gathered items from their WB-

29 Superfortress aircraft, attached them to a parachute they had fashioned, and airdropped them from the plane.

The islanders—who lived at

the time without running water or electricity and had recently been hit by a string of ferocious typhoons—scrambled to retrieve the gifts from above.

The tradition continues today, bringing together military members, students at the University of Guam, and local community and charitable organizations to support a common purpose.

"The time and dedication that people are willing to give is astounding," said Air Force Capt. Mitchell Foy, who led the Operation Christmas Drop committee. "It's amazing, watching everyone come together to make this humanitarian effort happen."

Air Force Col. David Gould, the 374th Operations Group commander, said he felt humbled to be part of the outpouring.

"When we all signed up to join the military, it was about service—not only service for our country, but service to the world," he said. "There are few operations on this planet that demonstrate as much commitment to service as Operation Christmas Drop."

Air Force Senior Airman Robert Hicks from the 36th Wing public affairs office contributed to this article.



TECH. SGT. SAMUEL MORSE

Crew members on a C-130 Hercules from Yokota Air Base, Japan, push a donated bundle of humanitarian supplies and gifts out the side door of the aircraft over an island in Micronesia, Dec. 18, 2012. Each year, the C-130s fly to Guam to carry bundles to islands in need during Operation Christmas Drop.

Blanco named for promotion to colonel



Lt. Col. Harry Camacho Blanco

Lt. Col. Harry Camacho Blanco from Chalan Kanoa, Saipan, was recently selected for promotion to colonel.

The selection lists containing the names and branches of National Guard and Army Reserve officers recommended for promotion to colonel have been released by the Army. The officers were selected for promotion by the fiscal 2012 Army Promotion List board that met in July 2012. Blanco was one of the first commissioned officers from the CNMI under a public law allowing CNMI decedents to become commissioned officers in the U.S. military. He was commissioned an infantry officer at the University of Guam and received an active duty commis-

sion. He served on active duty with the 25th Infantry Division (Light) and 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), Fifth U.S. Army, U.S. Army South, and now with U.S. Army Japan and I Corps (Forward). He also served with 9th Regional Support-Marianas and commanded Company E, 442nd (Separate) Infantry Battalion, an Army Reserve unit in Guam and the CNMI.

Blanco previously served as the Senior Reserve Component Advisor, a Special Staff to the Commanding General for U.S. Army Japan and I Corps (Forward). He is currently the Deputy G-5 (Host Nation). His promotion is pending U.S. Senate confirmation. (PR)

'Raiders of the Lost Ark' package mystery solved

CHICAGO (AP)—First, there was "Raiders of the Lost Ark." Now, there's "Mailers of the Lost Package."

Days after the University of Chicago announced it had received a replica of the journal from the film "Raiders of the Lost Ark," the school says it has solved an international mystery with its roots in Guam.

A few weeks ago, a journal addressed to one Henry Walton Jones, Jr.—the given name of Hollywood's Indiana Jones—was placed inside another package and mailed from Guam to Italy, where someone had

bought it on eBay.

But the smaller package fell out and was spotted by a U.S. postal worker, who saw it was addressed to Jones at the University of Chicago. The worker added the Chicago zip code and sent it on its way.

Upon its arrival at the school's admissions office, officials didn't know what to make of the package. There is no Henry Walton Jones Jr. on the faculty.

It took a student doing a bit of research on the Internet to discover that Jones was real—on big screen. Indiana Jones' character is said to be based

loosely on two U of C professors. Abner Ravenwood was an Egyptologist and archeologist at the school about a century ago. In the movie, he is a mentor of Indiana Jones, and the journal is his.

Though the craftsmanship of the journal, chock full of maps and old photographs, was impressive, a spokesman for the school's admissions office said, there were clues that indicated Ravenwood was not the author.

"The photos were of Harrison Ford during filming," said spokesman Garrett Brinker.

The school found out the

journal was the work of a Guam man whom Garrett described as a "prop replicator."

"Apparently, it takes him two weeks to make one of these replicas and then he sells them to people all over the world," Brinker said. "He says they usually go for about \$200 (but) I believe this one went for \$177."

Brinker said that the Oriental Institute, the university's famed museum and organization devoted to the ancient Near East, likes the journal and asked to display it in its main lobby.

"They asked for it and now it is in their possession," he said.



EVENTS MANAGER

Our Resort is seeking a motivated and experienced Events Manager who will build and strengthen guest relationships while driving event sales and overseeing all event bookings, event staff, and event operations.

We are looking for an individual who is highly creative, articulate, outgoing, and with the ability to provide excellent customer service and staff management in a fun, fast-paced and exciting environment. The candidate must be flexible, friendly, and hardworking and also enjoy interacting with both children and adults. His/her past experience should demonstrate success in sales, creativity, drive and initiative.

As the Events Manager, the responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Working with the Resort Management Team to create, host and promote special events
- Overseeing all event bookings and ensuring superior service to our guests
- Driving community relationships and event sales
- Performing the functions of event team members when necessary

Qualifications:

- Minimum Education: Associate's Degree preferably in Sales, Marketing or Tourism
- Minimum Experience: Two years of experience in a related field
- Ability to develop and market new event ideas
- Ability to work nights, weekends, and holidays
- Organizational, follow-up, and multitasking skills are a must

Interested applicants may send their applications to hr_frs@fiestasaipan.com. Application Forms may be obtained at our Security Office located at the South Wing. To be considered, applications must be submitted not later than January 30, 2013. Background checks and pre-employment drug testing will be required prior to employment.

Fiesta Resort & Spa, Saipan is an Equal Opportunity Employer
Qualified Women, Minorities, Veterans and Persons with Disabilities are urged to apply.

GUEST RELATIONS MANAGER (China Market)

Our Resort is looking for a Chinese-speaking (Mandarin) candidate with strong interpersonal, communication and presentation skills who will help ensure the daily smooth running of the hotel by taking care of its guests and being a point of contact for, both Chinese guests and staff.

As the Guest Relations Manager, the responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Working with the management team to provide focused attention on Chinese guests
- Promoting and developing loyalty from Chinese hotel guests by reacting positively to their individual needs and providing a high level of personalized guest service
- Direct any necessary changes to ensure seamless guest service
- Dealing with guest relation issues

Qualifications:

- Minimum Education: Associate's Degree preferably in Sales, Marketing or Tourism
- Minimum Experience: Two years of experience in a related field/similar role or in a high volume hospitality environment at supervisory level or as a Front Office Supervisor
- Advance or native Chinese Mandarin language speaker and writer
- Ability to work flexible hours including nights, weekends, and holidays
- Excellent communication, organizational, and multitasking skills are a must
- Team player

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUTS



Happy 7th birthday Donovan John Cabrera! We love you so much and may God continue to bless you with many more wonderful birthdays to come! Greetings come from the family!

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Happy birthday to our daddy, Floyd Waboi, and many more wishes and love to come. Greetings come from Mom, Bing and Nygel, Nicia and Zboi.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Opinion

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XXIII, Issue No. 1Published daily at 2/F JP Center,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP 96950Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR
Mark Rabago ASSOCIATE EDITOR

MEMBER

AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

How we can change end-of-life medicine

A gift Americans owe to themselves and their country in 2013 is lessons on how to die.

Doctors know this. They don't spend their final hours like the other 2.4 million Americans who die every year. They've seen patients hooked up to tubes in hospital beds, suffering unnecessary pain and indignity, while tens of thousands of dollars are spent on every medical option to extend lives that are clearly near the end. According to a Johns Hopkins study, most doctors have advance directives, reject CPR and live their final days with dignity, at home or in a hospice, surrounded by loved ones.

The San Jose Mercury News' Lisa M. Krieger has spent the past year grappling with our approach to death in America. Her insightful, heartfelt series, "The Cost of Dying," concluded with a practical analysis of how to change end-of-life medicine. She encouraged us to take charge of our own deaths, tell doctors what we want, reject treatments that we really know can't help and—this is most important—consider suffering, not death, the enemy. Expanding access to hospice care is a key to all this.

Pain can be managed very well today. Most Americans could die in peace at home. But nearly 80 percent die in hospitals or nursing homes, even though surveys show these are the last places the vast majority wants to be. About 20 percent die connected to tubes in intensive care units, the least humane and most expensive end of life care.

We need a culture change in our approach to death. We need to focus more on dying with dignity and less on extending life to the last possible minute. This will be better for individuals, and it will be better for America: Our health-care costs are killing our economy, and pointless end of life care is a big part of the reason.

This country spends nearly twice as much per capita on health care as any of our competitors in world markets, but by most measures, it achieves poorer results than its European counterparts. A major reason is that the 5 percent of Medicare patients who die every year consume almost one-third of all Medicare expenditures. And one-third of those costs are incurred in the final month of life, when there is no chance of a real recovery.

The number of Americans 65 and older will double in the next 20 years, putting more pressure on our medical system. People understandably worry that treatments that could benefit them may be less accessible, but the enormous amount of money paid to extend suffering at the end of life benefits no one.

Today 75 percent of Americans could die comfortably at home with hospice care. But we have to make that choice personally, talk frankly with doctors and family—and work to change family and community attitudes.

All we need is the will.

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The mentally ill vs those who love them

I once knew someone, many years ago, who was sent to a "rest home" by her aggravated husband. Today, you and I would call that "involuntary commitment," and the fellow was able to do it with relative ease because he was an important person, knew the right people, and the laws were on his side. This was a time, the 1970s, when a woman couldn't even be raped by her husband in a number of states and teenagers could be "grounded" all the way to the psychiatric hospital. It was a time when horrific places like Pennhurst were still operating, and anyone who grew up in the Philadelphia area knows what I'm talking about. More dungeon of horrors than medical facility, Dante himself couldn't have conjured up something as infernal as this "hospital" where the patients were chained to their beds and starved for days on end.

All of this is to show that I am not insensitive to the plight of the mentally ill. I have had people in my own circle who have dealt with the problem, a serious and heartbreaking one. Until recently, the laws were weighted far too heavily against the afflicted. You'll forgive the pun, but a mere generation ago the general rule seemed to be "out of mind, out of sight." It was preferable to hide the people with invisible yet debilitating wounds instead of treating them compassionately.

But as with most things, the corrective pendulum has swung too far in the opposite direction. With the ACLU at the head of the charge, civil rights activists have caused a sea change in the way that we deal with the mentally ill. Too often, while understandably focusing on the rights and needs of the patients, we ignore the people who live with and love them. We lose sight of the pain and damage an unbalanced person can cause in the lives of his family and friends. Yes, we've abandoned as archaic laws that used to allow involuntary commitment for subjective reasons, and once-accepted practices like lobotomy and electro-shock therapies would now be barred by the International Convention Against Torture.

These are good things.

What is not good, however, is the fact that civil rights now trump public safety when it comes to those who are potentially violent. The laws generally allow you to commit someone against their will if they have proven to be a danger to themselves or to others, which essentially means that someone has to take a steak knife to your throat or put the kitty in the microwave before they can be admitted against their will. These ex-post-facto determinations are never adequate when dealing with a diseased mind. It is ridiculous to have to wait until someone actually commits a crime before minimizing the chances that they will be able to wreak mayhem, as Adam Lanza

By **CHRISTINE FLOWERS**

Philadelphia Daily News

Christine M. Flowers is a lawyer and columnist for the Philadelphia Daily News. Readers may send her email at cflowers1961@gmail.com.



did on a cold December morning in Connecticut.

Of course, that doesn't sit well with the activists. In a recent column on Newtown I criticized the ACLU for their campaign on behalf of the "fabricated right to be a public danger." Not surprisingly, the civil libertarians came out in full force, attacking my insensitivity to the "rights of the disabled." One acquaintance sent me an email that dripped with sarcasm and naivete when she wrote, "Really? You think the ACLU invented the rights of the disabled? ... I often disagree with your positions, as you know, but this was a purely gratuitous slam at the ACLU, which I think disgusting from any quarter, but more so from a person who claims to be thoughtful."

Personally, what I find much more disgusting than any "gratuitous slam" at an organization that prides itself on addressing "rights" is the way that the ACLU and other such groups set up obstacles to families desperate for a way to help their diseased and troubled loved ones. The ACLU is impervious to their rights, and it is quite possible that Nancy Lanza ran into one of those obstacles in Connecticut. The ACLU chapter in that state actively opposed a law which would have made it easier for Connecticut to institutionalize or even treat on an outpatient basis a mentally ill patient if it had enough evidence to believe that the person was dangerous.

The ACLU said that the bill would "infringe on patients' privacy rights." And so, it went down to defeat months before Adam Lanza went on his rampage.

This is not to say that we need to return to the days of Pennhurst. It is not a call for mass institutionalization of the quirky-but-harmless. As a noted psychiatrist wrote in the New York Times this week, the vast majority of the mentally ill are not dangerous, although they are disproportionately represented among those who commit violent crimes.

This is simply a plea to recognize how far the pendulum has swung in favor of those who think that murdered kindergartners is a fair price to pay for personal liberty.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Bad policy begets more...

By **JOHN S. DELROSARIO JR.**
Special to the Saipan Tribune

John DelRosario Jr. is a former publisher of the Saipan Tribune and a former secretary of the Department of Public Lands.



The lawsuit filed by CUC recently reveals the obvious rush to seal a deal where both the former AG and the governor have overlooked the existence of a law prohibiting sole-sourcing of power purchases.

Mind-boggling the warp shift in decision by the former AG, from an initial strong opposition to servile approval. He was also handed 71 anomalies found by his legal staff to consider. Yet he looked the other way and affixed his signature anyway, a non-sequitur.

Was his decision premised on the governor's contagious smile and smooth assertion for "just this one time," the seed of ALL corruption? Appalling in that the former AG has stuck to what's legal and constitutional except on the hasty PPA deal. But with 71 legal anomalies identified by a shipload of lawyers at his disposal, how could he have missed the existence of a law prohibiting sole-sourcing and other serious legal issues?

The other irony is in the governor's decision to brave committing the CNMI to a \$2.3 billion debt—over a 25-year period—amidst economic cataclysm at home. Did he overlook the significant decline in revenue that point to a budgetary shortfall of at least \$200 million? Did

he ignore that taxes aren't fixed variables, therefore highly risky making a commitment under uncertain financial conditions?

To illustrate a point: Last fiscal year the CNMI raked in some \$126 million in revenues. Subtract 80 percent of the total and it leaves some \$46 million for all others. The Fund needs \$67 million annually, CHC \$38 million, and other obligations excluding the power plant deal of about \$7 million per year. Where did "experienced leadership" go? Ignoring the obvious isn't leadership but filthy politics that benefits the cherry-picked Saipan Development LLC. You quiz if purposeful fiscal and economic illiteracy are the source of the ill-conceived decisions.

It is despicably appalling too the governor's chief role in the obstruction of justice—tried unsuccessfully via DPS to prevent penal summons from being served the former AG—and how the former top law enforcement officer played into Fitial's scheme. Aren't they bound by the Constitution to protect the rights of citizens? Was their action anywhere near this mandate or was it more the rule of a dictator under a statist government?

Validity of the contract

A more critical ocular review raises more questions: Was the contract signed between the governor and his cherry-picked firm just for the two of them or was it executed on behalf of CUC? In brief, pertinent laws forbid sole-sourcing so it follows that the deal is between the governor and Saipan Development LLC, true? It excludes CUC's signature of approval. This aspect further raises questions of impropriety.

I can't figure out how the governor overlooked his fiduciary duties, signing a deal in spite of recommendations to the contrary. His signature only illuminates his apparent arrogance and dysfunctional role as head of state. And the more the issue is dissected, the fatter the maggots that come crawling out and falling off the pages of the contract. It's a one-sided deal that mercilessly leaves basically ALL expenses to consumers. Didn't the Consumer Division under the AG's Office review the PPA contract?

Saipan Development LLC was literally given a boilerplate deal at our expense. No wonder it's fixated on burning the midnight oil

on potential income in the billions of dollars, only to run into more powerful headwind. They're oblivious to the eventuality of relegating our children into slavery to pay off lifetime of debts we never wanted from the beginning. But if the two representatives (Mahmood and Jorgensen) are brokers, how come the former AG and governor fail to see that these miscreants aren't actual investors?

The shipyard fiasco

Now, would the shipyard proposal fly in light of funding uncertainties even for the Guam naval shipyard facility? Wouldn't the sequestration of DOD's budget adversely delete anything beyond Guam's shipyard? Eh, our arithmetic still says that one plus one is two and doesn't require enormous mathematical analysis to discern that the shipyard won't make it to first base. Kiss it off! It's history!

I sensed all along that at some point this administration would trip upon its total disregard of the rule of law. It finally did, somehow hoping it could make up for its inadequacies. It is for this reason that the multitude irrefutably rendered its decisive and conclusive voice of discontent, rebuking GOP incumbent legislators in the last midterm election. It's the voice of the people hailing from the grassroots level.

Too, the governor neglected the current high cost of utilities that has literally forced the shutdown of a lot of businesses here, including the exodus of foreign capital in recent years and continuing. It became a major deterrent to investment storming up the CNMI as a bad business venue. Yet he seems willing to finish the job of total economic disaster by imposing higher utility rates beyond what they are today by as much as 88 percent over the short term. Is this oxymoronic decision due to his exemption from paying utilities?

Question: How much longer is this administration going to drag the multitude through the hellish street of economic disaster and misery? How about leadership that "sees beyond the years"? I pray and hope that the court sees the expressions of our people through our prism for we can no longer afford any increase in utilities right smack in the middle of the quicksand of unprecedented economic disaster. Well, bad government policy begets more bad government policy, the victims being the multitude. *No mas!*

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Refunds postponed again: What's the real story?

Dear active members: How does it feel to have 15, 20, or 25 years of government service, all the while paying 11 percent of your paycheck to the Retirement Fund, payday after payday, to now find out *that you may not even get what you paid in*, let alone get to retire?

Unbelievable as it sounds, that is exactly what is happening. The current trustee and his team of attorneys have taken us on a wild ride the last three months.

After being nominated by Judge Gatewood in August to run the Fund as trustee, trustee Razzano has engaged in an interesting series of maneuvers.

Following the passage of Public Law 17-82, which allowed active members to apply for refunds by terminating their membership in the Fund, the trustee was initially efficient by setting up a system and timetable for refunds.

Almost immediately apparent was the snail's pace at which applications were being processed and members refunded. Joe Pangelinan, an experienced accountant, did the math two months later. At the current rate of processing, the Fund was averaging six to eight applications a day. At this rate it would take the Fund 253 working days, or over a full calendar year to process all 1,800 applications.

On Oct. 5, the first payouts of the initial 25 percent owed were paid to just under 100 members. Little did members know then that these would be the first and only payouts and that all activity (even processing) would stop on Nov. 16.

On Nov. 13, in his first letter announcing the postponement to members, Razzano mentions a hodgepodge of reasons to postpone payments to those affected under PL 17-82, including delinquent employee and employer contributions and 15 outstanding lawsuits.

The second letter to members on Nov. 27 again focused on reasons for postponement but this time almost exclusively targeting PSS' delinquent employee contributions as the *raison d'être*:

"The Fund believes that PSS' failure to remit employee contributions creates a problem for the Fund to comply with PL 17-82. There are now two categories of DB members as a result of PSS' non-payment:

■ DB members who have paid in 100 percent of their employee contributions, and

■ DB members who have not paid in 100 percent of their employee contributions *because their employer has failed to fully remit their employee contributions.*"

Razzano goes on: "Because of these two categories of DB members, PL 17-82 has created a situation where the Fund is unable to disburse 100 percent of the contributions..." and his last sentence: "I would like to assure you that the Fund is continuing to process PL 17-82 applications and investigating options to refund the employee contributions as soon as possible."

PSS paid in full the delinquent amount the very next day (a controversy ensued over a \$264,000 discrepancy but reportedly was later solved).

No word to members was heard from Razzano from this point onward. Two weeks later, on Dec. 13, CPA filed a contempt charge against Razzano for not complying with PL 17-82. One day prior Razzano appealed to Judge Gatewood to expedite approval of PL 17-82 (it is easy to interpret here, that Razzano was aware of the contempt charge that would be brought against him the next day).

No word was heard from Judge Gatewood on the matter. Instead, on Dec. 15 attorney Huesman answered questions addressed by a reporter and stated that the official stance of the Fund is that all refunds would be suspended until the case is heard in federal court on Jan. 15. In addition, in the event that PL 17-82 would still proceed, the Fund would still present a motion to eliminate interest payments to members.

The pattern should be very clear: Razzano and his attorneys have engaged in a variety of delay tactics to prohibit members from receiving their refunds. In addition, contrary to the trustee's statement on Nov. 27, that applications would continue to be processed, in actuality the last application approved by the Fund administrator occurred on Nov. 16 (see CNMI Retirement Fund website), a full 11 days prior.

The fact is when Razzano set in motion a system to refund members affected by PL 17-82, then proceeded to process and pay out the first 100 employees, he already "crossed the bridge." His abrupt turnaround on Nov. 13 begs explanation.

As the law now stands, active employees' individual contributions are their own personal property. As Huesman states on Dec. 15 in his comments to reporters: "Neither Ms. Johnson nor any members of the putative class of retirees are entitled to have employee contributions paid to them in the form of benefits."

Active members are invited to the American Memorial Park on Saturday, from 3pm to 6pm. We are a group of active employees attempting to create community awareness about our predicament. Please come and share information. Knowledge is power!

Mark Staal
As Matuis, Saipan

Thank you

I would like to use this forum to recognize and acknowledge both the Jones and the Tan families. Both families are very business-oriented and are extremely philanthropic to boot. We are very lucky to them here in the CNMI.

Times are tough here at home and we are still feeling the adversity of the current political controversies that seem to be on the minds of everybody these days. Lt. Gov. Eloy Inos was right when he said we need to "chill out." Things will fall into place when the time is right. Let's just take it easy until the end of the year.

Yet it seems that through it all, we have forgotten to realize and take a good look at the positive things that have and are happening here in the CNMI. Everything else seems to have been put on the back burner until such time all the bad stuff is taken cared of.

Anyway, the main purpose of this letter is to acknowledge the extreme and most heartfelt gratitude and appreciation we owe to these two families. Even with our economy in the toilet, these two families still believe in us and are still investing heavily in the CNMI and, by doing so, they are creating massive employment opportunities for our local people, as well as motivate them.

The Tan family bought and refurbished two hotels and tried to start an airline to increase our tourism numbers. This is on top of the various other businesses they own. On top of this, they really want to wholeheartedly create employment opportunities for our community. They are also extremely philanthropic and have donated millions of dollars toward education as well as other charitable organizations. Remember that word—"millions"!

The Jones family is the same. On top of their successful car dealership and real estate holdings, they have donated significant amounts of money to various charities. On top of this, I read that they also constructing a new resort hotel.

I personally would like to extend my appreciation to these two families and say "Thank you" for their continued support and belief in our community.

I would also like to say Happy New Year to everybody out there, most especially to those who cannot be with us because of their military deployment, ensuring and fighting for our freedoms that we sometimes take for granted but we enjoy nonetheless.






Happy New Year CNMI! Let us hope and pray that things will get better.

Michael Geisinger
As Lito, Saipan

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
				
Mostly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 25 mph.	Mostly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 15 to 25 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲85° ▼75°	▲86° ▼75°	▲87° ▼76°	▲86° ▼76°	▲86° ▼75°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	▲87 ▼79
Palau	Thunderstorms	▲85 ▼78
Yap	Thunderstorms	▲86 ▼79
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	▲86 ▼82
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	▲86 ▼81
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	▲86 ▼81
Majuro	Showers	▲87 ▼82

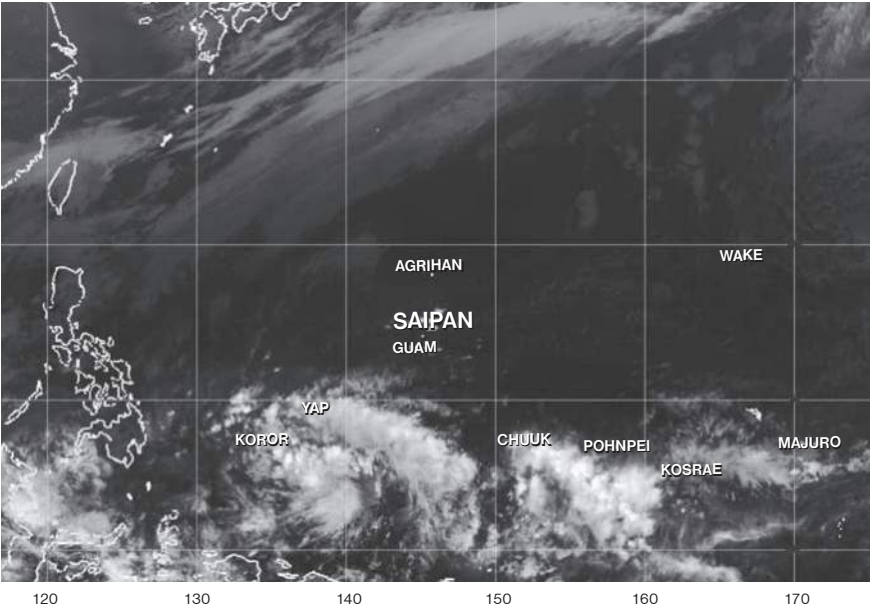
Around The Globe

Auckland	Partly Cloudy	▲74 ▼66
Beijing	Partly Cloudy	▲28 ▼16
Hong Kong	Showers	▲68 ▼63
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	▲78 ▼69
London	Showers	▲49 ▼44
Los Angeles	Sunny	▲64 ▼47
Manila	Cloudy	▲87 ▼78
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	▲69 ▼53
Miami	Partly Cloudy	▲78 ▼63
New York	Cloudy	▲37 ▼23
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	▲50 ▼36
Paris	Partly Cloudy	▲46 ▼38
Pusan	Windy	▲39 ▼20
Rome	Showers	▲56 ▼42
Salem	Partly Cloudy	▲42 ▼27
San Francisco	Sunny	▲57 ▼39
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	▲18 ▼3
Tokyo	Windy	▲56 ▼36
Washington, DC	Showers	▲44 ▼32

Tides

Saipan Harbor			
4:28 AM	Today	Low Tide:	0.0 Feet
11:18 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet
5:28 PM	Today	Low Tide:	1.0 Feet
10:17 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.6 Feet

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, TUESDAY, JANUARY 1, 2013

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A nearly stationary front stretches southwestward from north of the Marianas at 25N146E to beyond 130E at 17N. Extensive low-level cloudiness and patchy rain are found along this boundary and northward to beyond 25N. A tropical disturbance is generating scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms just southeast of Koror and Yap and well to the south of of Guam within 260 miles of a line from 8N138E to 2N146E. A trade-wind disturbance is triggering scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms just west of Kosrae and just south of Pohnpei within 160 miles of a line from 5N154E to 3N159E. Trade-wind convergence is producing scattered showers and a few thunderstorms south of Kwajalein but over Majuro within 100 miles of a line from 7N164E to 5N180.

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:44 AM	5:58 PM
Thursday	6:44 AM	5:59 PM
Friday	6:44 AM	6:00 PM
Saturday	6:45 AM	6:00 PM
Sunday	6:45 AM	6:01 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	10:03 PM	9:49 AM
Thursday	10:54 PM	10:29 AM
Friday	11:47 PM	11:10 AM
Saturday		11:53 AM
Sunday	12:42 PM	12:39 AM

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- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMUT SARI Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

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- COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.

CAMPUS BULLETIN

Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

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- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JAN. 1, 2013

DEPARTURES	ARRIVALS
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)	GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN
UA5070 4:35am 5:25am 2, 4, 6, 7	UA 5069 2:45am 3:35am 2, 4, 6, 7
UA5062 4:40am 5:30am 1, 3, 5	UA5071 7:05am 7:55am Daily
UA5068 8:25am 9:15am Daily	UA5073 9:50am 10:40am 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7
UA5074 11:10am 12:00pm 1, 4, 5, 7	UA5075 1:45pm 2:35pm 1, 4, 5, 7
UA5076 3:10pm 4:00pm Daily	UA5077 5:35pm 6:25pm Daily
UA5078 6:55pm 7:45pm Daily	UA5079 8:20pm 9:10pm Daily
UA5072 9:45pm 10:35pm Daily	
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)	NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN
DL287 6:00am 8:40am Daily	DL298 10:25am 3:00pm Daily
DL285 6:35am 9:15am 1, 3, 5, 7	DL286 7:40pm 12:15am+1 2, 4, 6, 7
DL297 4:25pm 7:20pm Daily	DL288 8:40pm 1:15am+1 Daily
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)	BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN
OZ608 3:10am 6:20am 4, 6, 7	OZ607 9:00pm 1:50am+1 3, 5, 6
OZ608 3:30am 6:40am 3	OZ607 9:35pm 2:25am+1 2
SAIPAN-OSAKA (KIX)	OSAKA (KIX)-SAIPAN
OZ119 4:00am 6:40am Daily	OZ120 9:50pm 2:20am+1 Daily
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)	SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN
OZ606 2:10am 6:00am 1	OZ603 9:00am 2:20pm Daily
OZ606 2:40am 6:30am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	OZ120 7:10pm 2:20am+1 Daily via KIX
OZ119 4:00am 6:40am Daily via KIX	OZ605 7:40pm 1:00am+1 7
OZ604 3:20pm 7:10pm Daily	OZ605 8:10pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)	SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN
3U8648 6:10am 8:40am 1, 4, 5, 7	3U8647 10:40pm 5:00am+1 3, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)	BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN
MU7108 4:05am 5:55am 1, 3, 5	MU7107 6:30pm 1:50am+1 2, 4, 7
SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)	GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN
3U8646 4:20am 7:30am 2, 6	3U8645 7:40pm 3:00am+1 1, 5
SAIPAN-VLADIVOSTOK (VVO)	VLADIVOSTOK (VVO)-SAIPAN
XF1734 6:30am 12:30pm 5	XF1733 8:00pm 12:05am+1 4
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)	MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN
OZ606/701 2:10am 11:15am 1	OZ704/603 12:10am 2:20pm Daily via ICN
OZ606/701 2:40am 11:15am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	DL172/288 8:05am 1:15am+1 Daily via NRT
UA5070/191 4:35am 9:55am 6 via GUM	UA190/5077 10:55am 6:25pm 3, 6 via GUM
UA5070/191 4:40am 10:00am 3	UA190/5079 10:55am 9:10pm 3, 6 via GUM
DL287/173 6:00am 10:25pm Daily via NRT	OZ702/605 12:30pm 1:00am+1 7 via ICN
UA5076/183 3:10pm 9:30pm 2, 5 via GUM	OZ702/605 12:30pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
UA5076/183 3:10pm 9:50pm 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM	PR110/UA5071 10:10pm 8:00am+1 1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
OZ604/703 3:20pm 11:00pm Daily via ICN	UA184/5071 10:55pm 7:55am+1 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA5072/PR111 9:55pm 7:50am+1 1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM	UA184/5071 11:59pm 7:55am+1 2, 5 via GUM
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)	HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN
OZ606/721 2:10am 11:50am 1 via ICN	OZ746/603 12:30am 2:20pm Daily via ICN
OZ606/721 2:40am 11:50am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN	OZ722/605 1:15pm 1:00am+1 7 via ICN
UA5076/147 3:10pm 10:30pm 1, 5 via GUM	OZ722/605 1:15pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ604/749 3:20pm 11:00pm Daily via ICN	UA180/5071 11:25pm 10:40am+1 1 via GUM
	UA180/5077 11:25pm 6:25pm+1 5 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U: Sichuan Airlines; MU: China Eastern; UA: United Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana; VLK: Vladivostok Air.

ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The *Saipan Tribune* is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency	Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota				FRE 115	13:00	13:10	Daily
FRE 100	7:30	8:00	Daily	FRE 117	14:30	14:40	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 119	16:00	16:10	Daily
FRE 100	8:20	8:50	Daily	FRE 121	16:40	16:50	Daily
Guam-Rota				FRE 123	17:40	17:50	Daily
FRE 300	17:00	17:30	Daily	FRE 125	18:30	18:40	Daily
Rota-Saipan							
FRE 17:50	17:50	18:20	Daily	Tinian-Saipan			
Saipan-Rota				FRE 102	7:05	7:15	Daily
FRE 200	9:30	10:00	Daily	FRE 104	7:50	8:00	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 106	8:20	8:30	Daily
Saipan-Rota				FRE 108	9:00	9:10	Daily
FRE 400	18:55	19:25	Daily	FRE 110	10:00	10:10	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 112	11:05	11:15	Daily
FRE 400	19:40	20:10	Daily	FRE 114	12:00	12:10	Daily
Saipan-Tinian				FRE 116	13:30	13:40	Daily
FRE 101	6:45	6:55	Daily	FRE 118	14:50	15:00	Daily
FRE 103	7:30	7:40	Daily	FRE 120	16:20	16:30	Daily
FRE 105	8:00	8:10	Daily	FRE 122	17:00	17:10	Daily
FRE 107	8:40	8:50	Daily	FRE 124	18:05	18:15	Daily
FRE 109	9:10	9:20	Daily	FRE 126	18:50	19:00	Daily
FRE 111	10:45	10:55	Daily				



NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

What do mass shootings say about America’s heart and soul?

By **L. MICKEY FENZEL**
THE BALTIMORE SUN

In his 1969 book, “Love and Will,” existential psychologist Rollo May contended that human tragedies that catch our attention can exemplify an underlying malady of the society in which they occur. Using an example whereby dozens of on-lookers failed to take any action as they observed the brutal stabbing of a woman in New York, May wrote of our collective inability to love and to exercise our will in healthy ways.

Instead, we choose detached sex and power grabs without consideration of the welfare of others. We live in a society in which college fraternities hold competitions to honor sexual exploits, and personal power is sought through the discharging of semi-automatic weapons on innocent children and adults. Atrocities of violence in advantaged, peaceful suburban communities and the streets of cities like Baltimore signal a social condition that must be addressed.

What is this condition? Hints of it are evidenced in these mass killings of innocents, of a Congress that labors unabashedly to protect the riches of the wealthy at the expense of the economically disadvantaged and middle class, of coaches and bishops who fail to protect children from sexual abuse, and of gun-control opponents who blame the supporters of gun control for the mass killings. If

only the principal was equipped with an automatic weapon of her own with which to confront and take out the shooter, some news show guests are contending, killings would have been avoided. We should be appalled at such idiocy!

Serious-minded and clear-thinking citizens will ask, as we must, “What do these violent events say about America’s heart and soul?” We must look hard to find an answer to this question in order to redeem our society and its citizens. What if in this search we find a cold heart and a darkened soul?

Guns are a big part of the darkness that covers America’s soul, to be sure. We sell guns in some contexts without conducting background checks and provide for the sale of semi-automatic, high-caliber weapons that virtually no one in our society needs for protection or legitimate sport. We take very few steps to ensure that guns are kept out of the hands of those who would do harm.

All human beings seek to matter, to have some kind of effect, to be accepted and acceptable, to make themselves known. Several years ago The Baltimore Sun ran a series on urban gangs in which one gang member described the rush that firing an automatic weapon at unsuspecting victims gave him. To see people scurry and fall reinforced for him how powerful he could be with the weapon in his hand.

Sadly, this is the kind of avenue that too many poorly adjusted, soul-injured individuals choose. We have read about teenagers and

young adults who have been rejected socially or made victims of Internet ridicule because of their peculiarities—or for no reason at all—and have taken the lives of others or themselves.

So, while we seek to take serious steps toward gun control, we also need to find a way to find our soul and to heal it. This is a task that we all must undertake, and we must insist that our leaders follow suit. We must find a way to help all citizens matter and have the opportunity to have a positive effect, whether through providing adequate opportunities to work, to be afforded a good quality education, or to receive the mental health care that is needed.

The United States is considered an individualistic society that values individual accomplishment, in contrast to collectivistic societies that focus more on the common good. I fear that our society has become too focused on individual accomplishment to the point where we have become individual manipulators and exploiters. We are focused on acquiring power while rendering others powerless. This is a path that signifies a loss of soul.

On the path to truly caring about all citizens is where we will find our soul. We know the way, but do we have the will?

L. Mickey Fenzel is a professor at Loyola University Maryland and a psychologist. His email is lfenzel@loyola.edu. He wrote this for the Baltimore Sun.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Holding our funds hostage

Remembering fully well when P.L.17-82 was still a bill, the 17th Legislature worked hard for more than a year to tailor this bill by extensively researching, debating, and finally coming out with a well thought-out legislation. Some active employees were instrumental by providing recommendations and vigorously lobbying for the passage of this legislation. Now it is a law mandating the initial 25 percent disbursement followed by the remaining 75 percent with a paltry interest attached. Some outside elements, not recipients, are opposed, saying that it is a flawed law. No way, Jose! The active employees were blessed and rightfully own P.L.17-82. Intruding parasites, back off! There is no room to leech on our pocketbooks. Bear in mind that the active employees were the unfortunate ones to not ever have the chance to enjoy the retirement benefits. Now, we are only asking for the disbursement of our monies.

The Retirement Fund, which is tasked to exercise due diligence of the law, is perhaps noncompliant and disrespectful. Initially, the Fund was very receptive in releasing a public announcement that opened a floodgate for filing employees’ contribution disbursement applications. On the first and second day of application runs, the venue was inundated with active employees who queued for three to four hours before receiving attention. A few days later, the first batch of P.L.17-82’s 25 percent hard-earned disbursement checks were issued. It is a simple matter.

Mood swings were obviously seen when the Fund filed some sort of motion with the local court, ordering for \$113 million to be unscathed for the purpose of a contribution disbursement. Then the Fund moved to the federal court for more advice. The federal court came up with the trustee *ad litim*, lawyer Joseph Razzano, who is practicing in Guam. Wow! I believe his hourly rate is \$250 plus incidental expenses should be shouldered by the central government. Sorry, governor! You inherited this mess from your predecessor and, of course, your noncompliance with the employer’s contribution.

According to the Fund, the unremitted employee contributions stalled the disbursement. Now that all delinquent government sectors settled their debts with the Fund office, it is a different ball game. What a propaganda campaign! *Papalatong!* Patience is getting thin. No threat, purely frustration. Dragging this matter to court is totally unconceivable. This is a delay tactic for continued detention of disbursements. Since the Fund is on the brink of collapse, perhaps it is clinging to a thread that is about to sever. How can the Fund abate cost when still enrolling intrusive elements to meddle in the decision-making of our money? Please refer to P.L.17-82.

Why did the acting administrator initially seek court guidance? She is a very competent person. She was doing quite well in the beginning, evidently with the first check batch disbursement. Additionally, she is armed with experienced in-house lawyers. Now, she is merely a figurehead and lackey for her boss. Since the law was born at the Legislature, who is mum at the moment, it is an expense-free venue for advice. The central government is also offering help to ease the cost. Please intervene. However, the federal court is rendering a decision and guidance sometime in January 2013. It can be a late Christmas gift or a grim New Year’s resolution.

Honorable judge, this is not about siblings’ feud over one place of land without a will; it is about what was written in the books for

the heirs of P.L.17-82.

There is speculation that the *ad litim* will be replaced by a receiver, a lawyer. The imminent transition to receivership will definitely renew the work of the *ad litim*. This is a continuing saga that will prolong the hostage of the disbursement indefinitely. Please make it simple and adhere to P.L.17-82. The substance is all there.

Ton Aguon
Dandan, Saipan

Feigning to be what he is not

Last week, Diego Benavente, a former legislator who resigned from the 17th Legislature without honestly explaining to his voters from election Precinct 1 the true reason for not completing the full term of his legislative contract, gave threatening advice to last month’s legislative victors of a public recall should they fail to impeach the governor in the 18th Legislature.

First of all and foremost, let me publicly declare and let it be known that Diego Benavente has absolutely no standing and, more importantly, no credibility whatsoever, to make public statements on behalf of the people of Rota. Secondly, Diego Benavente was a disgrace to his own constituents by abandoning their mandate. Now all of a sudden, Diego Benavente anointed himself as the pharaoh of the entire Commonwealth and wants to be an active advocate of self-righteousness.

He wants to absolve himself of all political evils, even after presiding over one of the most destructive legislature in the legislative history of the Commonwealth. It was under his leadership when most of the issues that are now hunting us were either not seriously thought out or legislatively skewed in favor of a preferred party. He wants the entire population of the Commonwealth to recognize that he is above reproach and all the ills of the Commonwealth is solely caused by Gov. Fitial, therefore the 18th Legislature better impeach him or else the people will undertake a recall movement for their removal from office.

Diego Benavente is a classic example of an individual who is feigning to be what he is not. He should be a cause for public indignation and must be forever know as a hypocrite. Let me make one thing very clear to the people of Saipan and, in particular, to Diego Benavente: The impeachment of Governor Fitial was never a critical issue for the overwhelming majority of people on Rota and neither to the undersigned. What is critically important to us here on Rota is for the entire members of both houses of the Legislature to immediately set aside pettiness, demonstrate intellectual maturity and acute understanding of our fundamental issues and work cooperatively to deal with our mounting health, education, economic, safety and social issues because if the members of the 18th Legislature fails to resolve them, we will definitely be heading over our own banzai cliff.

There is so much distrust and second-guessing between and amongst our people in our community and this is mostly the product of partisanship. I would like to encourage Diego Benavente, if he thinks he still have plenty of political capital, to maximize his ability and devote his time and efforts to eliminating all the negative vibes and accentuate our human capacity to be positive. Some politicians just never learn when to be graciously accepting of their own limitations.

Jade San Nicolas
Reno, Nevada

Condolences

Rogelio Rana aka “Ka Roger” Cada, 79, passed away last Dec. 26, 2012, at the Commonwealth Health Center.

On behalf of ka Roger’s friends, co-workers and colleagues, we are expressing our deepest sympathy to his family for his untimely death. We lost a good friend during this very difficult time when we are fighting together for our improved immigration status. From Sta. Rosa, Laguna in the Philippines, Ka Roger (as many of us called him) has been on Saipan from 1979 or 33 years and has been very active in all foreign workers’ advocacies for the improved immigration status of all foreign workers in the Northern Mariana Islands.

It’s sad when someone who has spent almost half of his life in a foreign land like Saipan, a U.S. soil, passes away without fulfilling his dream and hoping that someday the fruits of his hard labor will give him a peace of mind without fear of being deported due to immigration problems. The dream of Ka Roger was never fulfilled and never will be.

In sorrow, we mourn the loss of a friend, in gratitude we embrace your generosity, kindness, and helpfulness, and in sympathy we reach out to those who grieve for your untimely death.

To all fellow overseas Filipino workers, friends, and colleagues, words seems inadequate to express the sadness we feel for Ka Roger, but the Lord has plans for all of us, we have to accept it. Beginning Dec. 30, 2012, onward, we are inviting you for the nightly rosary for Ka Roger at Kristo Rai Church Social Hall in Garapan at 7:30pm.

Our condolences to the family and friends of Ka Roger.

Carlito J. Marquez
Puerto Rico, Saipan

Someone’s throwaway is someone else’s treasure

Empty Vessel Ministry Foundation is thankful to all our supporters for their presence at our Garage Sale/Flea Market fundraisers and for all their donations. Through your gifts and donated items, we are turning them into good use. Low-income families can receive free or affordable items. Both new and used clothing and other items we sell support our programs.

Special thank you to our volunteers for their help and *Saipan Tribune* and *Marianas Variety* for putting a word out about our needs.

Our hope is to open our Garage Sale/Flea Market daily, if we are able to obtain more donated items. At present, we are only able to open on Saturdays.

For those who are clearing your closets and drawers or leaving the islands, please think about Empty Vessel Ministry Foundation. Perhaps you would like to donate some of those items for us to sell or give away to those in need. We are very happy to extend our hand of help through this service.

Thank you for supporting our efforts. Your help is making a difference in the lives of others. We deeply appreciate your assistance. Visit us on Facebook, www.emptyvesselministry.org or call our office at 235-2340 or 483-0162.

Rose Smith
Director Empty Vessel Ministry Foundation

Business

Democratic officials: Fiscal 'cliff' deal reached

WASHINGTON (AP)—Racing the clock, the White House sealed a New Year's Eve accord with Senate Republicans late Monday to neutralize across-the-board tax increases and spending cuts in government programs due to take effect at midnight, according to administration and Democratic officials.

Under the deal, taxes would remain steady for the middle class and rise at incomes over \$400,000 for individuals and \$450,000 for couples—levels higher than President Barack Obama had campaigned for in his successful drive for a second term in office.

Spending cuts totaling \$24 billion over two months aimed at the Pentagon and domestic programs would be deferred. That would allow the White House and lawmakers time to regroup before plunging very quickly into a new round of budget brinkmanship certain to revolve around Republican calls to rein in the cost of Medicare and other government benefit programs.

Officials also decided at the last minute to use the measure to prevent a \$900 pay raise for lawmakers due to take effect this spring.

Even by the dysfunctional

Averting the cliff?	
Here is a summary of the tentative deal between the White House and Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky) to avert tax increases and spending cuts to take effect in 2013:	
Income tax rates	Extends Bush-era tax cuts on incomes up to \$400,000 for individuals, \$450,000 for couples; earners above that would have tax rate of 39.6 percent, up from 35; extends Clinton-era caps on itemized deductions and phase-out of personal exemption for individuals making more than \$250,000, couples, more than \$300,000
Estate tax	Estates taxed at top rate of 40 percent; first \$5 million in value exempted for individual estates, \$10 million for family estates
Capital gains, dividends	Taxes would increase from 15 to 20 percent of capital gains and dividend income over \$400,000 for individuals, \$450,000 for families
Alternative minimum tax	Indexes the tax for inflation to prevent nearly 30 million middle- and upper-middle income taxpayers from being hit with higher tax bills
Other tax changes	Extends for five years the expansion of child tax credit, earned income tax credit, up to \$2,500 credit for college tuition; extends for one year accelerated "bonus" depreciation of business investments in new property and equipment, tax credit for R&D costs and tax credit for renewable energy, such as wind-generated electricity
Unemployment insurance	Extends jobless benefits for the long-term unemployment for one year
Medicare doctor payment	Blocks a 27 percent cut in Medicare reimbursements to doctors for one year
Social Security payroll tax cut	Allows a 2 percentage point cut in payroll tax first enacted two years ago to lapse
Unresolved	Defense and other agency across-the board spending cuts, also called sequestration
Source: AP Graphic: Judy Treible	
© 2012 MCT	

standards of government-by-gridlock, the activity at both ends of historic Pennsylvania Avenue was remarkable as the administration and lawmakers spent the final hours of 2012 haggling over long-festering differences. "One thing we can count on with respect to this Congress is that if there's even one second left before you have to do what you're supposed to do, they will use that last second," the president said in a mid-afternoon status update on the talks.

As darkness fell on the last day of the year, Obama, Biden and their aides were at work in the White House, and lights burned in the House and Senate. Democrats complained that Obama had given away too much in agreeing to limit tax increases to incomes over \$450,000, far above the \$250,000 level he campaigned on. Yet some Republicans recoiled at the prospect of raising taxes at all.

Democratic senators said they expected a post-midnight vote on the measure. They spoke after a closed-door session with Vice President Joseph Biden, who brokered the deal with Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell.

"The argument is that this is the best that can be done on a bipartisan basis," said Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., when asked about the case the vice president had delivered behind closed doors.

Passage would send the measure to the House, where Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio, refrained from endorsing a package as yet unseen by his famously rebellious rank-and-file. He said the House would not vote on any Senate-passed measure "until House members—and the American people—have been able to review" it.

Numerous GOP officials said McConnell and his aides had kept the speaker's office informed about the progress of the talks.

The House Democratic leader, Rep. Nancy Pelosi of California, issued a statement saying that when legislation clears the Senate, "I will present it to the House Democratic caucus."

Without legislation, economists in and out of government warned of a possible recession if the economy were allowed to

fall over a fiscal cliff of tax increases and spending cuts.

And while the nominal deadline for action passed at midnight, Obama's signature on legislation by the time a new Congress takes office at noon on Jan. 3, 2013—the likely timetable—would eliminate or minimize any inconvenience for taxpayers. A late dispute over the estate tax produced allegations of bad faith from all sides.

After hours of haggling, Biden headed for the Capitol to brief the Democratic rank and file.

Earlier, McConnell had agreed with Obama that an overall deal was near. In remarks on the Senate floor, he suggested Congress move quickly to pass tax legislation and "continue to work on finding smarter ways to cut spending" next year.

The White House and Democrats initially declined the offer, preferring to prevent the cuts from kicking in at the Pentagon and domestic agencies alike. A two-month compromise resulted.

Minimum wage gap grows wider between states

OLYMPIA, Wash. (AP)—With a bump in the Washington state minimum wage to \$9.19 an hour, high school student Miranda Olson will edge closer to her goal of buying the black Volkswagen Beetle she's been researching online.

Olson is only able to pick up part-time hours working at a cafe after classes and on weekends. But the extra pennies she'll earn in 2013 will add up over the coming weeks and months.

"It's not much, but it's something," said Olson, 16, who works at Wagner's European Bakery and Cafe in Olympia. "Every bit helps."

Many workers around the country won't be as lucky as

residents of Washington state, which is raising its minimum wage Tuesday by 15 cents an hour even though it already has the highest state baseline in the country. Minimum-wage workers in Idaho will make nearly \$2 an hour less in 2013 than their counterparts living just one state to the west.

Automatic increases designed to compensate for inflation have steadily pushed up wages in some states, even through the recession, expanding the pay gap between areas that make annual adjustments and those that don't. Of the 10 states that will increase the minimum wage Tuesday, nine did so automatically to adjust for inflation.

Rhode Island lawmakers approved that state's wage increase in the past year.

Paul Sonn, legal co-director at the National Employment Law Project, said he hopes more states will start looking at automatic adjustments as the economy recovers. He said the model—which Washington state adopted in 1998—helps avoid sudden jolts as states try to catch up with each other.

"We think there's a case that it's better for everyone, including the business community, to have predictable, regular, small increases every year," Sonn said. The automatic adjustments aren't much. Washington's bump will mean those who work 40-hour weeks will earn

an extra \$6 a week—enough for a couple lattes—or about \$300 a year.

Hundreds of thousands of workers are expected to get a pay increase with the wage adjustments that begin New Year's Day. Along with Washington and Rhode Island, the changes will occur in Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Missouri, Montana, Ohio, Oregon and Vermont.

Among the nine states with automatic adjustments, the average minimum wage is \$8.12 an hour, up from a little under \$8. States that do not have automatic changes operate with an average minimum wage of about \$7.40—a difference of about \$1,500 a year for a full-time worker.

Congress tightens belt, trims spy budget for 2013

WASHINGTON (AP)—Congress has drastically trimmed the budget for U.S. spies and satellites for 2013, though not quite as deeply as the White House wanted.

In one of the last votes of the year, House lawmakers voted Monday 373-29 in favor of a Senate-passed bill to slightly boost the president's \$72 billion budget request for intelligence agencies including the CIA, adding extra cash for the counterterrorism fight against al-Qaida, and the counterintelligence

fight against foreign governments trying to spy on the U.S.

That's down sharply from roughly \$80 billion in 2012, which marked the peak of intelligence spending since the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.

"The bill holds personnel levels, one of the biggest cost drivers, generally at last year's levels," said House Intelligence Committee Chairman Mike Rogers, R-Mich. "Even so, the bill adds a limited number of new personnel positions for select, high-priority posi-

tions, such as FBI surveillance officers to keep watch on terrorists."

The House Intelligence Committee's ranking member, Rep. Dutch Ruppersberger, D-Md., said the bill "invests in personnel and programs that are working and cuts things that aren't."

The bill was stripped of several measures meant to block the leaking of classified information, including a provision that would have limited which government officials could brief

journalists on intelligence. The measures had been drafted after lawmakers objected to a series of news stories that anonymously quoted senior administration sources describing sensitive intelligence programs, such as the process by which targets are chosen for lethal drone strikes overseas.

The chair of the Senate Intelligence Committee, Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., says the measures were taken out to get the bill passed but that the issue remains a problem.

Deal will prevent spike in milk prices

WASHINGTON (AP)—A potential doubling of milk prices will be averted as part of the compromise that White House and congressional bargainers reached on wide-ranging legislation to avert the "fiscal cliff," a leading senator said late Monday. Senate Agriculture Committee Chairwoman Debbie Stabenow, D-Mich., told reporters that negotiators had agreed to extend portions of the expired 2008 farm bill through September. She said that includes language keeping milk prices from rising, but excludes other provisions like energy and disaster aid for farmers.

Stabenow said she considers the slimmed-down extension to be "Mitch McConnell's version of a farm bill." She was referring to the Senate Republican leader from Kentucky, who she said forced bargainers to accept the version of the farm bill that appeared in the deal.

McConnell spokesman Michael Brumas responded: "Sen. McConnell put forward a bipartisan, responsible solution that averted the dairy cliff and provided certainty to farmers for the next year without costing taxpayers a dime."

Just a day earlier, Stabenow said leaders from both parties on the House and Senate agriculture committees had agreed to extend the entire farm bill. Stabenow and House Agriculture Chairman Frank Lucas, R-

Okla., announced Sunday that they had agreed on a last-minute move that would extend the entire farm bill and replace dairy programs that expire at midnight Tuesday. Expiration of those dairy programs could mean higher milk prices at the grocery store within just a few weeks.

But the House GOP had not endorsed the committees' extension agreement.

The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office estimated Sunday that extending the entire bill through September, including disaster assistance for farmers affected by drought, could cost more than \$1 billion this budget year. House Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio, has pushed back on passage of a new five-year farm bill for months, saying there were not enough votes to bring it to the House floor after the House Agriculture Committee approved it in July. The Senate passed its version of a farm bill in June. The bill, generally passed every five years, includes food stamps, farm subsidies and other help for rural areas. But the prospect of higher milk prices prompted some action. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack has said Americans face the prospect of paying \$7 for a gallon of milk if the current dairy program lapsed and the government returned to a 1948 formula for calculating milk price supports.

Nation

US, Europe hope the new year brings better times

NEW YORK (AP)—From the glittering New Year's ball dropping in Times Square to joyous fireworks in London and cheers in a once-isolated Asian country, the world did its best to ring in 2013 with hope for renewal after a year of economic uncertainty, searing violence and natural disasters.

"With all the sadness in the country, we're looking for some good changes in 2013," Laura Concannon, of Hingham, Mass., said as she, her husband, Kevin, and his parents joined hundreds of thousands of revelers lined up for blocks through bustling Times Square on Monday.

Yvonne Gomez, 53, a physician from Grand Forks, N.D., glowed as she and her husband, 63-year-old potato farmer Greg Halverson, took in the festivities in New York.

"I couldn't begin the new year in a more beautiful way," she said. "I married him two weeks ago and here we are in the middle of Times Square celebrating the new year—two widowers who found each other."

Revelers with New Year's hats and sunglasses boasting "2013" packed the streets in the 35-degree cold to count down the first ball drop in decades without Dick Clark, who died in April and was honored with his name printed on pieces of confetti and on one of the crystal panels on the Times Square ball.

Matias Dellanno, 37, of Buenos Aires, Argentina, stood in the middle of the square with his wife and 3-year-old son, beaming with joy as his eyes caught the multicolored lighting illu-



Confetti flies over New York's Times Square after the clock strikes midnight during the New Year's Eve celebration as seen from the Marriott Marquis hotel Tuesday, Jan. 1, 2013 in New York. AP

minating the square just before midnight.

"I feel a completely new hope for 2013," he said. "It can't be any worse than last year, when my business lost clients. It was a rough year for everyone. The new year has to be better!"

Security in Times Square was tight, with a mass of uniformed police and plainclothes officers assigned to blend into the crowd. With police Commissioner Raymond Kelly proclaiming that Times Square would be the "safest place in the world on New Year's Eve," officers used barriers to prevent overcrowding and checkpoints to inspect vehicles, enforce a ban on alcohol and check handbags.

Syracuse University student Taylor Nanz, 18, said she and a friend had been standing in Times Square since 1:20 p.m. Monday. They hadn't moved from their spot because "if you leave, you lose your place," she said, shivering behind an iron barricade with a clear view of One Times Square, the building where the crystal ball hovered.

"It's the first time—and the last time," she said. Elsewhere, lavish fireworks displays lit up skylines in Sydney, Hong Kong and Shanghai. In the United Arab Emirates city of Dubai, multicolored fireworks danced early Tuesday up and down the world's tallest building, the Burj Khalifa.

In Rome, Pope Benedict XVI

celebrated New Year's Eve with a vespers service in St. Peter's Basilica to give thanks for 2012 and look ahead to 2013. He said that despite all the death and injustice in the world, goodness prevails.

In Russia, spectators filled Moscow's iconic Red Square as fireworks exploded near the Kremlin. In Rio de Janeiro, revelers dressed head-to-toe in white as dictated by Brazilian new years' tradition flooded onto Copacabana beach for a concert.

Organizers said about 90,000 people gathered in a large field Yangon, Myanmar, for their first chance to do what much of the world does every Dec. 31—watch a countdown. The

reformist government that took office in 2011 in the country, long under military rule, threw its first public New Year's celebration in decades.

"We feel like we are in a different world," said Yu Thawda, a university student who went with three of her friends.

Parts of Europe held scaled-back festivities and street parties, the mood a bit restrained—if hopeful—for a 2013 that is projected to be a sixth straight year of recession amid Greece's worst economic crisis since World War II. London, the often

soggy British capital, was dry and clear, as the familiar chimes of the clock inside the Big Ben tower counted down the final seconds of 2012 and a dazzling display of fireworks lit the skies above Parliament Square. People cheered as the landmarks were bathed in the light of the display, which included streamers shot out of the London Eye wheel and blazing rockets launched from the banks of the River Thames.

Elsewhere, the atmosphere of celebration was muted with concern.

Suspect in NYC subway death arrested before



In this image provided by the New York City Police Department, a composite sketch showing the woman believed to have pushed a man to his death in front of a subway train on Thursday, Dec. 27, 2012 is shown. AP

NEW YORK (AP)—The family of a woman accused of shoving a man to his death in front of a subway train called police several times in the past five years because she had not been taking prescribed medication and was difficult to deal with, authorities said Monday.

Erika Menendez, 31, was being held without bail on a murder charge in the death of Sunando Sen. She told police she pushed the 46-year-old India native because she thought he was Muslim, and she hates them, according to prosecutors.

They had never met before she suddenly shoved him off the subway platform because she "thought it would be cool," prosecutors said. The victim was Hindu, not Muslim. It wasn't clear whether Menendez had a diagnosed mental condition. But her previous arrests and legal troubles paint a

portrait of a troubled woman.

Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly would not say what medication she was taking or whether she had a psychiatric history. Authorities were called to her home five times since 2005 on reports of an emotionally disturbed person.

In one instance, police said, she threw a radio at the responding officers.

Menendez had been arrested several times, starting when she was young. In 2003, she was arrested on charges she punched a 28-year-old man in the face inside her Queens home, but the case was later dropped. She pleaded guilty later that year to assaulting a stranger on the street near her home. The victim, retired Fire Department official Daniel Conlisk, said the attack was violent and relentless.

Doctors: Blood clot located in Clinton's head

WASHINGTON (AP)—Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton developed a blood clot in her head but did not suffer a stroke or neurological damage, her doctors said Monday. They say they are confident that she will make a full recovery.

In a statement that revealed the location of the clot, Clinton's doctors said it is in the vein in the space between the brain and the skull behind the right ear. She is being treated with blood thinners to help dissolve the clot, the doctors said, and she will be released once the medication dose has been established.

Clinton, 65, is making ex-

cellent progress and is in good spirits, Dr. Lisa Bardack of the Mount Kisco Medical Group and Dr. Gigi El-Bayoumi of George Washington University said in a statement.

Clinton, who was spending a second day at a New York hospital, developed the clot after suffering a concussion earlier in December. She had fainted, fallen and struck her head at home while battling a stomach virus, her spokesman said. She has not been seen publicly since Dec. 7.

Phillipe Reines, her spokesman, said her doctors discovered the clot Sunday while performing a follow-up exam on the concussion. She was admitted to New York-Presbyterian Hospital. Clinton's complication "certainly isn't the most common thing to happen after a concussion" and is one of

the few types of blood clots in the skull or head that are treated with blood thinners, said Dr. Larry Goldstein, a neurologist who is director of Duke University's stroke center. He is not

involved in Clinton's care.

The area where Clinton's clot developed is "a drainage channel, the equivalent of a big vein inside the skull—it's how the blood gets back to the heart," Goldstein said.

Blood thinners usually are enough to treat the clot and it should have no long-term consequences if her doctors are saying she has suffered no neurological damage from it, Goldstein said.

Clinton had planned to step down as secretary of state at the beginning of President Barack Obama's second term. Whether she will return to work before she resigns remained a question.



Clinton

ACROSS THE NATION

Survivors of fatal Ore. bus crash say some ejected

PENDLETON, Ore. (AP)—Survivors of a bus crash that killed nine people on a partly icy section of interstate in rural Eastern Oregon said Monday some passengers were thrown from

the vehicle through broken windows after it skidded out of control, smashed through a guardrail and plummeted 200 feet down an embankment. When the tour bus came to a rest, terrified passengers looked around for their loved ones. "Some mothers screamed to find their son

or daughter," said Jaemin Seo, a 23-year-old exchange student from Suwon, South Korea. The charter bus, owned by a British Columbia company, crashed Sunday just east of Pendleton while returning to Canada from Las Vegas—one of the stops on a nine-day western

tour. Aboard were 48 people, some of them exchange students from South Korea.

Members-only marijuana clubs open in Colorado

DENVER (AP)—Recreational marijuana clubs opened Monday

in Colorado, less than a month after the state governor signed into law a constitutional amendment allowing recreational pot use. With a reggae soundtrack and flashing disco-style lights, Club 64 in an industrial area just north of downtown Denver opened Monday afternoon,

with some 200 people signed up. The opening came less than 24 hours after club organizers announced they would charge a \$29.99 admission price for the bring-your-own pot club. Two Colorado clubs were believed to be the first legal pot dens in the nation.

Asia

Asian nations giving enthusiastic welcome to 2013

LONDON (AP)—Sydney's skyline erupted with tons of exploding fireworks as the first country to usher in 2013, extravagant displays lit up Hong Kong and Beijing, and increasingly democratic Myanmar joined the party for the first time in almost five decades.

Asia welcomed the New Year on a grand scale, partying with renewed optimism despite the so-called fiscal cliff threatening to reverberate globally from the United States and the tattered economies of Europe, where the party was expected to be a bit more subdued.

Celebrations were planned around the world, culminating with the crystal ball drop in New York City's Times Square. One million people are expected to cram into the area for the countdown.

Global celebrations began Monday in Sydney, where the balmy summer night was split by 7 tons of fireworks fired from

roof tops and barges, many cascading from the Sydney Harbor Bridge, in a 6.6 million Australian dollar (\$6.9 million) pyrotechnic extravaganza billed by organizers as the world's largest. In a field in increasingly democratic Myanmar's largest city, Yangon, about 90,000 people experienced the country's first public New Year countdown, after almost five decades under military regimes that discouraged or banned big public gatherings.

"This is very exciting and also our first experience in celebrating the New Year at a big countdown gathering. We feel like we are in a different world," said Yu Thawda, a university student who came with three of her friends.

In austerity-hit Europe, the mood was more restrained—if hopeful. In Athens, fireworks over the ancient Acropolis will usher in 2013—projected to be a sixth straight year of recession

amid the country's worst economic crisis since World War II.

Still, In his televised New Year's Eve message, Greek Prime Minister Antonis Samaras promised Greeks that the worst of the crisis is past, and declared 2013 a "year of hope" that will see the beginning of the country's rebirth.

Celebrating New Year's Eve with a vespers service in St. Peter's Basilica, Pope Benedict XVI said that despite all the death and injustice in the world, goodness prevails.

In his homily, Benedict said taking time to meditate in prolonged reflection and prayer can help "find healing from the inevitable wounds of daily life."

In Hong Kong, tens of thousands of people lined the Victoria Harbor to view this year's 12.5 million Hong Kong dollar (\$1.6 million) fireworks display, said to be the biggest ever in the southern Chinese city.

NKorea's Kim wants better living standards, arms

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—Making his first New Year's speech, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un called Tuesday for his country to focus on economic improvements with the same urgency that scientists put into the launch of a long-range rocket last month. Kim, shown speaking on state TV, said lifting living standards is the new year's most important task—a clear acknowledgement that North Koreans want improvement in an economy that has long lagged behind the rest of Northeast Asia.

He also pushed for the development of more advanced weapons, a "revolution" in science and technology and reunification with "compatriots"

in South Korea, which elected a president last month who has vowed to open dialogue with Pyongyang after five years of tense ties.

The speech was the first televised New Year's Day message by a North Korean leader in 19 years. North Korea founder Kim Il Sung routinely addressed his people on New Year's Day, but Kim Jong Il never gave a TV address during his 17-year rule. During his leadership, the New Year's message was published as a joint editorial in the nation's three major newspapers.

North Korea also had its first grand New Year's Eve celebration, with residents of the capital treated to the boom of cannons and fireworks at mid-

night. The speech itself was a signal that Kim will continue with a leadership style more in line with his gregarious grandfather, national founder Kim Il Sung, than with his father, Kim Jong Il, who avoided making public speeches.

Kim Jong Un took power after his father's Dec. 17, 2011, death. Early in his first year, Pyongyang negotiated a deal with Washington for food aid in exchange for a nuclear freeze, but it collapsed after North Korea attempted to shoot a rocket into space in April. The rocket failed shortly after liftoff, but a successful second attempt on Dec. 12 helped Kim gain crucial political and popular support in his country.

keep a residual force in Afghanistan past 2014 but the size has yet to be determined.

Pakistan child measles deaths surge in 2012

KARACHI, Pakistan (AP)—An international health body says measles cases surged in southern Pakistan in 2012, with hundreds of children dying of the disease. The World Health Organization did not give a reason for the increase in deaths, but a provincial health official said that the disease hit areas where poor families do not vaccinate their children. Maryam Yunus, a spokesperson for the World Health Organization, said Tuesday that 306 children died in Pakistan of measles in 2012, compared to 64 the year before. She said the jump was most pronounced in southern Sindh province, where measles killed 210 children in 2012. She said only 28 children had died there in 2011.

the crime in India's capital on Dec. 16.

Afghans: Next force transition starts in 2 months

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—The next phase of transferring security from NATO to Afghan control will begin in two months and aims to cover nearly 90 percent of the country's population, the Kabul government announced Monday. The transition, which began in early 2011, is slated to give Afghan forces full responsibility for security by the end of 2014, when most NATO troops will have withdrawn. Misgivings persist about the readiness of Afghan forces, although their numbers have grown rapidly over the past year to more than 330,000. They now shoulder most combat operations, while NATO forces, including some 66,000 U.S., troops are preparing to pull out. The U.S. intends to

World

In concession, Israel eases restrictions on Gaza

JERUSALEM (AP)—In a major concession to Gaza's Hamas leaders Monday, Israel dropped its five-year ban on construction materials crossing into the territory and raised hopes there that rebuilding could begin following a damaging eight-day Israeli air campaign.

The easing of restrictions is an outgrowth of the cease-fire that ended the airstrikes and months of daily rocket fire from Gaza at Israel. Contacts mediated by Egypt to follow up the truce produced the concession, and Israel promised to keep easing the lives of Gaza's 1.6 million residents, as long as Israelis were no longer targeted by rocket fire by Gaza militants.

How long the new arrangement holds could serve as a test case for the brittle truce between the bitter enemies. It also reflects a new power equation, with neighboring Egypt under the control of the Muslim Brotherhood, the parent group of Hamas.

Israel, together with Egypt, imposed a land and naval embargo on Gaza after Hamas violently overtook the terri-



AP
Palestinian workers rebuild a house in Gaza City, Monday, Dec. 31, 2012. Israel has started allowing long-banned building materials into the Gaza Strip, its first key concession to the territory's Hamas rulers under a cease-fire that ended eight days of intense fighting last month, the military said Monday.

tory in 2007. Although Israel eased the restrictions in 2010, building materials such as cement, gravel and metal rods were still largely banned because Israel claimed militants could use them to make fortifications and weapons.

Hundreds of smuggling tunnels under the Gaza-Egypt border gave Gaza a conduit for all manner of goods as well as weapons, though the blockade remained intact.

During eight days of violence in November, the Israeli military said 1,500 rockets were fired at Israel, including the first from Gaza to strike the Tel Aviv and Jerusalem areas. The rocket attacks killed six Israelis and wounded dozens. Israeli airstrikes killed 169 Palestinians, many of them militants, and caused considerable damage. Israel said it targeted Hamas installations and government buildings.

Protester shot in Cairo may have been targeted

CAIRO (AP)—Gunmen drove into Cairo's Tahrir Square before dawn Monday and fired at an anti-government sit-in, seriously wounding a protester who had been jailed and tortured by former military rulers after he witnessed the killing of another activist. Two lawyers involved in the case suggested it was a targeted attack.

Lawyer Tamer Gomaa identified the seriously wounded activist as Muhanad Samir, 19, and said he was battling for his life with a number of pellets embedded in his skull and in his face.

Gomaa said witnesses recognized the attackers and identified them as security agents dressed in civilian clothes. Gomaa quoted witnesses as saying

some of the attackers had visited the square hours before and inquired about Samir by name and about others at the sit-in.

A security official dismissed the charges as nonsense, noting that some of the witnesses said the attackers were masked. He was speaking on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the media.

He added that authorities were searching for the attackers.

Other witnesses said the attacker aimed at Samir's, shooting him at close range, according to Gomaa. One of the attackers was collecting bullet shells, apparently to clear evidence. Political tensions have been running high in Egypt over the past month pitting opponents of Islamist President

Mohammed Morsi against his supporters, turning violent at times. Police and security have largely stayed out of the confrontations.

Activists who revolted against police abuse in Egypt's uprising nearly two years ago say little has changed in the conduct of security forces. Samir is a witness to the killing of another activist, his friend, during violent protests last year outside the Cabinet. They were protesting against the military rulers who were in charge before Morsi's election.

Samir, who was shot in his leg at the time, was sent to trial, charged with attacking soldiers and vandalizing public properties. He was released in October pending trial.

Chavez suffers new complications in cancer fight

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)—President Hugo Chavez's new complications after cancer surgery prompted his closest allies to call for Venezuelans to pray for him on Monday, presenting an increasingly bleak outlook and prompting growing speculation about whether the ailing leader has much longer to live.

Vice President Nicolas Maduro looked weary and spoke with a solemn expression as he announced in a televised address from Havana on Sunday that Chavez now confronts "new complications" due to a respiratory infection nearly three weeks after his operation. He described Chavez's condi-

tion as delicate.

The streets of Caracas were abuzz on Monday with talk of Chavez's increasingly tough fight, while the news topped the front pages of the country's newspapers.

"He's history now," said Cesar Amaro, a street vendor selling newspapers and snacks at a kiosk in downtown Caracas. He motioned to a daily on the rack showing side-by-side photos of Maduro and National Assembly President Diosdado Cabello, and said politics will now turn to them.

Amaro said he expects a new election soon to replace Chavez. "For an illness like the one the president has, his days

are numbered now," he said matter-of-factly.

In Bolivar Plaza in downtown Caracas, Chavez's supporters strummed guitars and read poetry in his honor on New Year's Eve. They sang along with a recording of the president belting out the national anthem.

About 300 people filled a Caracas church for a Mass to pray for Chavez.

"This country would be terrible without Chavez. He's the president of the poor," said Josefa Carvajal, a 75-year-old former maid who sat in the pews. "They say the president is very sick. I believe he's going to get better."

ASIAN BRIEFS

5 face murder charges in gang-rape case in India

NEW DELHI (AP)—Indian police said Tuesday that they expect to formally charge five of six suspects with murder in the death of 23-year-old woman who was raped on a moving bus in New Delhi. The sixth suspect in the case that has outraged the country is under 18 and a juvenile. Police ordered a bone test for the sixth accused to confirm his age, according to a police officer who spoke on condition of anonymity as he was not authorized to talk to reporters. Under Indian law, a juvenile cannot be prosecuted for murder. New Delhi police spokesman Rajan Bhagat said Tuesday that a charge-sheet in the case will be filed in court on Thursday. The suspects face the death penalty if convicted. The physiotherapy student died last week in a Singapore hospital where she had been sent for emergency treatment after

Focus

HUNCHUN, China (AP)—The warning came from Kim Jong Un, the North Korean ruler who sees his isolated nation, just across the border from this busy Chinese trading town, as under siege. The attack, he said, must be stopped.

“We must extend the fight against the enemy’s ideological and cultural infiltration,” Kim said in an October speech at the headquarters of his immensely powerful internal security service. Kim, who became North Korea’s supreme leader after the death of his father a year ago, called upon his vast security network to “ruthlessly crush those hostile elements.”

Over the past year, Kim has intensified a border crackdown that has attempted to seal the once-porous 1,420-kilometer (880-mile) frontier with China, smugglers and analysts say, trying to hold back the onslaught.

The assault that he fears? It’s being waged with cheap televisions rigged to receive foreign broadcasts, and with smuggled mobile phones that—if you can get a Chinese signal along the border—can call the outside world. Very often, it arrives in the form of wildly popular South Korean soap operas smuggled in on DVDs or computer thumb drives.

In North Korea, a country where international phone calls and Internet connections exist only for a tiny fraction of a tiny elite, and televisions and radios must be permanently preset to receive only state broadcasts, it’s Korean-language TV heartache they crave.

“South Korean dramas, that’s what everyone wants,” grumbled a Seoul-based Christian missionary who runs a string of safe houses in this part of China, where his network helps people living underground after fleeing North Korea. One safe house is reserved for traders who sell everything from electronics to shoes inside North Korea—and who smuggle everything from Bibles to soap operas on the side. He spoke on condition of anonymity to protect the safety of his network.

There’s “Autumn in My Heart,” a 12-year-old tear-jerker replete with switched babies, forbidden love, and a comatose heroine. And “Stairway to Heaven,” an epic of more forbidden love, more switched identities, blindness, insanity, a brain tumor and an evil stepmother. Everywhere in the soaps, there are tales of unrequited love, conniving rivals and handsome young men who just don’t realize they’d find true love with the girl next door.

But if it looks absurd—a Stalinist nation vowing to crush an assault of bad lighting and over-acting—the dilemma is deadly serious for Kim, who needs to find a way to modernize his country and its economy while holding onto absolute power.

Today, changing technologies, ambitious smugglers and

well-funded critics of Pyongyang mean that everything from DVD melodramas to illegal Chinese cellphones to Korean-language radio news broadcasts funded by the U.S. government make their way into North Korea. Their presence exposes an ever-growing number of North Koreans to the outside world and threatens the underpinnings of the Kim regime.

Kim’s crackdown has been largely aimed at the border with China, long the route for much of the outside information making its way into North Korea, as well as for refugees trying to get out.

Entire border security units have been replaced inside North Korea, fences have been strengthened and punishments ramped up for anyone caught trying to get through, according to smugglers, analysts and Chinese with family ties across the border. Meanwhile, special security units have been formed to seek out any contraband information or technology that Pyongyang sees as a threat.

“There has definitely been a push to roll back the tide of the flow of information,” said Nat Kretchun, associate director of an international consulting group InterMedia, which released a report earlier this year about information flow into North Korea, based on surveys of hundreds of recent North Korean defectors. The study was commissioned by the U.S. State Department.

His conclusion: North Korea is increasingly anxious to keep information at bay, but has less ability to control it.

People are more willing to watch foreign movies and television programs, talk on illegal mobile phones and tell family and friends about what they are doing, he said.

“There is substantial demand” for things like South Korean movies and television programs, said Kretchun. “And there are intensely entrepreneurial smugglers who are more than willing to fulfill that demand. For now, though, times are tough along the border, with smugglers saying North Korean guards have become far stricter about searching for contraband.

In a country where one family has held absolute control for more than 60 years, a communist enclave that survived the downfall of the Soviet Union and a devastating 1990s famine, the notion of allowing knowledge of the larger world is deeply feared.

“Even a hint of illusion or submission to the enemy is the shortest road to death and self-destruction,” Kim said in his



In this Saturday, Dec. 8, 2012 photo, Chinese paramilitary policemen build a fence near a concrete marker depicting the North Korean and Chinese national flags with the words “China North Korea Border” at a crossing in the Chinese border town of Tumen in eastern China’s Jilin province.

North Korea cracks down on knowledge smugglers

October speech, according to the state news agency KCNA.

The enemy works out of places like Hunchun, a brutally cold, money-hungry border town of car parts shops, cavernous indoor markets piled with shiny polyester clothing and off-brand electronics so cheap it seems almost impossible. Just a few miles from both North Korea and Russia, it’s a town where nearly all signs are in three languages—Chinese, Korean and Russian—and where you can find a smuggler in just a few phone calls. Even if they rarely give a name, and are often identified only by their mobile phone numbers.

“Let me worry about how to do it,” laughed one smuggler, asked how he gets his goods into North Korea. He is a friendly man, dressed business-casual in black corduroys and a black sweater.

Asked what he could get across the border, he made clear that business was thriving. Televisions, including ones able to pick up foreign stations? No problem. DVD players? Sure. Chinese movies? Yes.

But when asked about South Korean DVDs, the man shifted uncomfortably in his chair. His partner spoke up. No South Korean items—not DVDs, thumb drives, cosmetics or food.

“Nothing,” the partner said firmly. Soap operas, at first, might not seem like conduits of underground information. But they are

threats nonetheless, offering windows into worlds that North Koreans both lack and desire.

North Korean viewers living in tiny two-room homes and struggling to feed their families can see houses with bedrooms just for children, and dinners with endless food. They see everyday people casually complaining about policemen and politicians. Scenes like that are provocative in a country where defectors say criticizing the ruling family can send entire families to sprawling prison camps, and where bicycles are considered luxury items for many.

Plenty of other smugglers are willing to carry what the man in Hunchun is not.

Millions of foreign TV and movie recordings are thought to be floating around North Korea, though they are most easily available in cities near the Chinese border. With the crackdown, analysts say smugglers appear to have shifted to new techniques, at least for videos: carrying recordings on tiny thumb drives, and then transferring the programs to DVDs inside North Korea.

Because once information starts to flow, information cannot be turned off like a spigot. At most it can be slowed.

In many ways, Kim is facing an authoritarian contradiction.

North Korea has been trying—albeit haltingly and slowly—to revitalize its barely functioning

economy and crack open a door to the outside. Foreign tourists are now commonplace in Pyongyang, though on tightly controlled trips, and Kim has told his people that they should never go hungry again. Western movies occasionally are shown on state television. North Korean officials now actively court foreign investors. As a result, North Korea has found itself flirting with modernity—more than a million of the 24 million North Koreans now have mobile phones, for instance, though they can only place and receive calls domestically—while trying desperately to keep a tight grip on the public.

“They want to modernize but the cost of this effort is information, which could easily destabilize the regime,” said Victor Cha, former director for Asian affairs at the National Security Council in the George W. Bush administration, and now a professor at Georgetown University. “Without control of information, there is no regime.”

Exactly when the latest crackdown began isn’t clear. Many analysts date it to early 2011, as Pyongyang watched the wave of protests sweeping the Arab world. But it also appears to have intensified since the December 2011 death of North Korea’s longtime leader, Kim Jong Il, and the rise of his son, Kim Jong Un. The younger Kim, almost completely unknown until

late 2010, is believed to be about 29 years old.

In the clearest sign of the crackdown, the number of North Korean refugees reaching South Korea in 2012 has dropped by almost half, to about 1,400, compared to last year. While that statistic doesn’t include every North Korean who fled across the border, many of whom spend years living underground in China, it is widely seen as a general indication of the increased frontier security.

But the North Korean market for outside knowledge, nearly all observers say, has become insatiable. It’s been more than a decade since everyday North Koreans caught their first real glimpses of the outside world, when a breakdown in government control during the 1990s famine combined with the arrival of cheap Chinese electronics. The hunger for the larger world resembles, in many ways, the appetites in China in the years after Mao Zedong’s 1976 death, when Beijing began opening the door for the world’s mass media.

Today in North Korea, the idea of winning a fight against information seems an impossible goal.

If nothing else, said a one-time smuggler who eventually fled to South Korea, too many powerful North Koreans are making money in the business. He clearly remembers his early televised revelations, when DVDs showed him so much that his own country didn’t have.

“I felt sad about the state of my country when I watched the DVDs,” said the defector, who now lives in Seoul and spoke on condition he not be named, fearing retribution against family still living in North Korea.

Campus Life

'Pay As You Earn' student loan repayment plan introduced

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The U.S. Department of Education has introduced a new student loan repayment plan, which caps monthly payments based on income and could lower monthly payments for many students. "Pay As You Earn" caps payments of Federal Direct Student Loans at 10 percent of income for eligible recent graduates, resulting in lower monthly payments. As many as 1.6 million borrowers may find relief through this program.

The Department of Education now offers multiple repayment options to aid in managing federal student loans. More than 1.3 million borrowers already use the Income-Based Repayment plan, which caps monthly payments at 15 percent of income.

The Department of Education recently launched an online application that allows borrowers to compare their estimated monthly payments under different income-driven repayment plans and make an informed choice in their repayment plan selection. The electronic application is available to borrowers who have at least one Direct Loan, or a loan in the Federal Family Education Loan program that is eligible to be repaid

under one of the income-driven plans. Borrowers can access the electronic application either through their loan servicer's website or by logging on to <http://www.studentloans.gov/>.

The department also has an online resource such as the Financial Awareness Counseling Tool, which helps borrowers better understand their loan obligations and manage their finances. The interactive tool provides students with basic financial information, helps borrowers establish a budget based on their individual circumstances, and offers repayment tips and strategies to avoid default. Visit <http://www.studentaid.gov/>

Delegate Madeleine Z. Bordallo (D-GU) said: "I applaud the Department of Education for addressing the very serious and difficult issue of student loan repayments in the current economic environment," said Congresswoman Bordallo. "The programs are innovative and recognize that it is important to give our students avenues to encourage their education and responsible repayment. I encourage students to identify the best payment plan for them, in order to reduce payments and successfully manage their debt. While these tools are helpful,

we must continue to look at broader policies that will help address the ballooning costs of higher education. I look forward

to continue working with Secretary Duncan to ensure that a col-

lege education is accessible for all students." (PR)

Halbert calls for courage at COM-FSM graduation



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
The College of Micronesia-FSM holds its 56th Commencement Exercises on Dec. 20, 2012, at the FSM-China Friendship Sports Center in Palikir.

PALIKIR, Pohnpei—The College of Micronesia-FSM held its 56th Commencement Exercises on Dec. 20, 2012, at the FSM-

China Friendship Sports Center, located at the National Campus in Palikir.

At the ceremony, attended by graduating students, dignitaries, staff, administrators, a regent, faculty, family and friends, Sen. Dohsis Halbert from the FSM Congress rallied the college leadership and graduating students to always have courage. As the keynote speaker, Halbert encouraged everyone never to give in to obstacles that impede progress, but to always show courage. Halbert also called on the COM-FSM Board of Regents to never give in to challenges that interfere with accomplishing the great mission of the college.

The ceremony started at 9am with a procession by the graduating students, members of the college faculty, college administrators, and dignitaries into the celebration venue. Grand Marshal Professor Emmanuela Garcia, Faculty of the Year from Pohnpei Campus, carried the college mace and led the procession. The flag bearers, the graduating students, the college faculty, and finally the college administrators and the dignitaries followed the grand marshal.

Besides the flags of the Federated States of Micronesia and the four FSM states of Kosrae, Pohnpei, Chuuk, and Yap, the procession also featured flags from Japan, United Kingdom, Palau, Sri Lanka, Canada, India, Romania, United States of America, China, Germany, Philippines, Fiji, Kiribati, American Samoa, Cameroon, and Lithuania. These flags represent the diversity of the college community.

Vice President for Student Services Ringlen P. Ringlen gave the welcoming remarks after the invocation by Pastor Epel Ilon and the singing of the Micronesian Anthem.

"As an institution of higher education, no event in the college is as important as commencement exercises. For our students it is a time to recognize and celebrate their academic accomplishments. For the families of our students, commencement provides yet another point of pride. For all of us and for our faculty most especially, commencement is an opportunity to acknowledge our work and success in educating the young men and women who represent the future hopes, dreams and aspirations of the FSM. We believe in what we do here at the college. Thank you all for believing and working with us to transform lives through this institution," said Ringlen.

He said that the college is grateful for the restoration of \$700,000 to its FY 2013 Budget by FSM President Mori and FSM Congress and called for their support in the years to come. Ringlen said the college is also grateful for broad participation it received while reviewing its mission, that the college's strategic plan was developed through broad collaboration, that a proposal from BECA will contribute toward the development to the college's facilities master plan, and that those who attend the 56th Commencement Exercise took part in the celebration of the college's most important event.

Laura Fujimoto, a graduate

and secretary for the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society, gave a presentation on their Project Graduation.

Halbert's keynote address was followed by the conferral of academic honors by COM-FSM president Joseph M. Daisy, Ed.D. and vice president for Instructional Affairs Mariana Ben Dereas to graduates who earned high grade point averages.

Next was the valedictory speech, which was delivered by Brandy Marie F. Yinug, who reminded the graduates to always remember that they are Micronesians.

The college was fortunate to have the University of Guam dean of the School of Education, Frankie Santos Laanan, Ph.D., who joined Dereas and presented the graduates to the Board of Regents chairman Kasio Mida for his conferral of degrees and certificates of achievements. The College of Micronesia-FSM and the University of Guam entered into an agreement in 2002 and developed a partnership BA program in Elementary Education and is offering it at COM-FSM. Laanan's participation at the ceremony signifies the existing partnership between UOG and COM-FSM.

After the acceptance of the graduates by FSM Secretary of Education Rufino Mauricio, Ph.D., the graduates received their diplomas followed by the turning of the tassels led by Daisy.

Pastor Epel Ilon concluded the celebration with a benediction followed by the recession. (PR)

In Celebration of His New Life

†Ronald Henry Sablan DelRosario
Lovingly known as "Ron"
July 09, 1951 – December 28, 2012

In His New Life, He Now Joins His:
Parents: †Juan DelRosario
†Francisco Arriola Manahane
†Magdalena Sablan Manahane

His memories will forever live in the hearts of his:
Son: John Michael A. DelRosario/
Lerina Villazon & Children

Brothers, Sisters and In-Laws:
John S. DelRosario Jr./Julie P. and Children
Francisco S. DelRosario and Children
Herbert S. DelRosario/Rose D. and Children
Manuel S. Manahane/Flora H. and Children
David S. Manahane/Shirley and Children
Luis S. Manahane and Children
Emilio S. Manahane/Kumiko and Children
Ramon S. Manahane/Emerfina J. and Children
Jose S. Manahane/Bertha DLC. and Children
Maria S. Mickelson/John M. and Children
Anicia S. Mahanane/Russel and Children
Rita M. Taitano/Canice T. and Children
Anthony S. Manahane/Francisca T. and Children

Daily Mass of Intentions are being celebrated every evening from Wednesday, January 2nd to Friday, January 4th at 6:00 pm followed by Holy Rosary.

Funeral Services will be held on Saturday, January 05, 2013. His remains will lie in state at the Nuestra Señora dela Paz Memorial Chapel from 8:00 to 9:30 am. Holy Rosary will be recited at 8:00 am followed by Responso services at 09:15 am. Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 10:00 a.m. at Saint Jude Church followed by Interment Service at Chalan Kanoa Cemetery where he will be at a peaceful rest.

**PLEASE JOIN US IN PRAYERS
THE FAMILY**

Life & Style

Concern over Oscar voting extends deadline

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Growing concern that problems with the new electronic Oscar voting system could lead to record-low turnout has prompted the motion picture academy to extend the deadline for members to vote for Oscar nominations.

But with next week's highly anticipated announcements looming, the extension is only

for a day, until Friday. The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences said Monday any votes received after the new deadline will not be counted.

"By extending the voting deadline we are providing every opportunity available to make the transition to online balloting as smooth as possible," said the academy's chief operating of-

ficer, Ric Robertson, in a statement. "We're grateful to our global membership for joining us in this process."

Reports of difficulty accessing the Oscars' first-ever online voting system and fears that it could be hacked have raised questions about balloting for the 85th annual contest. Earlier this year, the academy and its long-time accountants, PricewaterhouseCoopers, partnered with the electronic voting firm Everyone Counts Inc. to develop the system.

"There's considerable concern from many members that

voter participation will be at record lows this year because the people who wanted to take a chance on this new cutting-edge system are either giving up on it or worried they won't be able to cast their votes," said Scott Feinberg, awards analyst and blogger for The Hollywood Reporter.

In the past, Oscar voting has been compiled strictly through paper ballots sent through the mail. The new system allows members to choose between voting online or sticking with a traditional mail-in ballot.

Morgan Spurlock, the doc-

umentary filmmaker whose 2004 film "Super Size Me" was nominated for best documentary, posted on Twitter last week that he wasn't able to log on to vote electronically and his ballot was instead mailed to him.

"The password they sent didn't work for my log-in—and they couldn't email me a new log-in, only snail mail," tweeted the 42-year-old director.

The academy said it has made several voting resources available to members, including assisted voting stations in Los Angeles, New York and

London, and a 24-hour support line.

A spokesman for Everyone Counts didn't immediately respond to a request seeking comment.

Besides online voting, a retooled nomination period could also affect the competition.

Organizers moved up the unveiling of the Oscar nominations to Jan. 10. That change puts the announcement three days before Hollywood's second-biggest awards ceremony, the Hollywood Foreign Press Association's Golden Globes, which are scheduled for Jan. 13.

'Hell on Wheels' will return to AMC

By RICH HELDENFELS
AKRON BEACON JOURNAL



Q: Is "Hell on Wheels" coming back?

A: Yes, though not without some

off-camera drama. In November, Deadline.com reported that AMC was set to renew the show for a third season, without series creators Joe and Tony Gayton but with Josh Shiban continuing as show runner—the person most responsible for getting the show made day-to-day. Then Shiban announced he was leaving. That delayed a full announcement of a third season until a new show runner was found.

That show runner is now John Wirth, whose background includes work on "V," "Falling Skies" and "Terminator: The Sarah Connor Chronicles." And a third season of 10 episodes is slated for the third quarter of 2013.

By the way, Deadline notes that "Hell on Wheels" "is the latest AMC series hit by major creator/show runner departures. "The Walking Dead's" Frank Darabont left in Season 2, and "Rubicon" creator/exec producer Jason Horwitch exited during production on its first and only season."

Also, "Mad Men" creator Matt Weiner quit the show during negotiations for a fifth season (which aired in 2012) when AMC asked him to cut the running time of each episode to make room for more commercials. A deal was finally made for a fifth and sixth season, and Weiner stayed.

Q: Can you PLEASE tell me what happened to Paget Brewster from "Criminal Minds"? I love that show, but really miss her.

A: Brewster left the series at the end of the seventh, 2011-12 season (and had nearly left the season before during budget cuts which also led to the departure of A.J. Cook from the show).

"I really didn't feel challenged anymore and I wanted to learn something and be excited again," the actress said, according to the Hollywood Reporter. "I was getting cranky

on Criminal Minds and we'd gone through some unnecessary cast changes—if that is as diplomatic as I can be about it—and I never got over it." And, she said, "At a certain point you're so familiar with the rhythms that you can reach a point where you get lazy. I'm afraid I did that."

As if to underscore her unhappiness with "Minds," she guest-starred on the season premiere of NBC's "Law & Order: Special Victims Unit," which airs opposite the CBS show, and said that work was more challenging. She is also a voice on the animated series "Dan Vs.," airing on the Hub channel.

Q: Is the movie "The Man Who Fell to Earth" available on DVD?

A: With the 1976 film starring David Bowie and directed by Nicolas Roeg, the answer is yes and no. It has been released on DVD several times, and on a Criterion edition Blu-ray in 2008. However, neither the Blu-ray nor the DVDs are in current release. So Amazon.com lists it for sale from various vendors but at often high prices. (An unused Blu-ray can run you about \$130, for example.) The movie is easily available as streaming video on Amazon and Netflix.

Q: I want to know if the program "Unforgettable" is going to be on the later schedule for CBS.

A: It appears so. When CBS announced its 2012-13 schedule in May, it did not include the drama starring Poppy Montgomery, which had aired in 2011-12. Then, the following August, it announced that the show would be back for 13 episodes in summer 2013.

"I don't understand what makes a show stay on or what makes it go away," Montgomery told the Give Me My Remote website, "but I sort of accept that it's right if they make that decision. And so when it was gone, I was sad, I will always love that character and the people I work with, so I understood. And I've worked with CBS for so long that I was like, 'They're family. We'll do something together again.' And when it came back, I was genuinely flabbergasted and thrilled."

In Celebration of His New Life

†Francisco Borja Palacios

Lovingly known as "Tik"

Was born to Life on October 16, 1939 and called to his Eternal rest on December 26, 2012 at the age of 73.

In his new life, he now joins his:

Father: †Antonio Santos Palacios (Laduk, Maka)

Mother: †Magdalena Arriola Borja Palacios (Tuhu, Te'e)

Father/Mother In Law: †Jose C./+Ana B. Manibusan

First Wife: †Concepcion "Conchita" Mafnas Palacios

Son: †Anthony Manibusan Palacios

Sisters: †Catalina Palacios, †Remedio Palacios

Brothers & Sisters In Law: †Inocencia I. Palacios, †Carmelita M. Palacios, †James L. Hemley, †Nicolasa M./†Vicente Cepeda, †Heronimo P./†Candilaria Manibusan, †Rufina M./†Pedro Tudela †Sylvia M./†Antonio Cabrera †Vicente P./†Maria Manibusan, †Josepha M./†Santiago Camacho, †Rita M./†Juan Santos, †Victoria M./†Gregorio Sablan, †Abraham T./†Bernadita Manibusan, Luis Manibusan

His loving memories will forever live in the hearts of his:

Wife: Veronica Inocencia "Cheng" Benavente Manibusan Palacios

Children/Spouses/Grand Children/Great Grand Children:

Joseph/Bertha Palacios (Anthony & Naoko (Ryona), Joel, Jonathan, Angel (Alanna Jade), Conchita & Juan Camacho (Ioane), Joseph Jr., Jude Noel)

Ignacio "Doug" Palacios and children

Velma/Paul Camacho (RyAnne Veronica, Puti'on Primitiva, Paul William II)

Frank Jr./Melissa Palacios (Kody Dione, Reared Children: Naomi Ann, Koryn Charmaine)

Brothers & Sisters/In Laws: Adolpho/Odessa Palacios, Patricia/Martin Debeer, Edward Palacios, Lucia Palacios, Ignacio/Dianne Palacios, Rebecca/Joaquin Cruz, Ruth P. Damian, Faustina Palacios, Jose Palacios, Casiano B./Elsie Matsunaga, Francisco B./Nelda Manibusan, Maria M./Moses Sibetang, Dolores B. Manibusan, Lydia M./Paul Manglona, Violeta D. Manibusan

Reared God Children: Cherry Lou M. Rojo, Daisy Ann M. Rojo, Kevin M. Rojo

He will also be missed by numerous Aunties, Uncles, Cousins, Nieces, Nephews, God Children and Friends

Daily mass is being offered at 6:00 am and the Holy Rosary at 7:00 pm at San Jose Church. On Monday, December 31, 2012, mass is at 6:00 am, immediately followed by the Holy Rosary. On Thursday, January 3rd, 2012, our dearly beloved will be escorted from the Borja Funeral Home to San Jose Church at 7:00 am. Responso, Holy Rosary and public viewing will follow. Mass of Christian Burial will be at 11:00 am, followed by the Internment Service at the Chalan Kanoa Cemetery where he will be laid to rest.

Thank You, Si Yu'us Ma'ase' and God Bless

Ginen as Veronica "Cheng" Benavente Manibusan Palacios, Children and Family

Kardashian, West feel 'blessed' over baby news

ATLANTIC CITY, New Jersey (AP)—Kim Kardashian and Kanye West are feeling lucky about their first child together.

"It's true," the 32-year-old reality TV star said in a statement on her site Monday. "Kanye and I are expecting a baby. We feel so blessed and lucky and wish that in addition to both of our families, his mom and my dad could be here to celebrate this special time with us."

Kardashian's father, Robert Kardashian, died in 2003. West's mother, Donda West, died in 2007.

Kardashian added in the blog post that she was "looking forward to great new beginnings in 2013 and to starting a family."

The 35-year-old rapper revealed to a crowd of more than 5,000 in song form at a concert Sunday that his girlfriend is pregnant. Kardashian was in the crowd at Revel Resort's Ovation Hall with her mother, Kris Jenner, and West's mentor and best friend, Jay-Z.

The news instantly went viral online, with thousands posting and comment-



AP
Kim Kardashian, right, and Kanye West, left, are shown before an NBA basketball game between the Miami Heat and the New York Knicks in this Dec. 6, 2012 file photo taken in Miami.

ing on the expecting couple.

Most of the Kardashian clan tweeted about the news, including Kim's sisters. Kourtney Kardashian wrote: "Another angel to welcome to our family. Overwhelmed with excitement!"

West told concertgoers to congratulate his "baby mom" and that this was the "most amazing thing."

Representatives for West and Kardashian didn't immediately respond to emails about the pregnancy.

The rapper and reality TV star went public with their relationship in March.

Kardashian married NBA player Kris Humphries in August 2011 and their divorce is not finalized.

West's Sunday-night show was his third consecutive performance at Revel. He took the stage for nearly two hours, performing hits like "Good Life," "Jesus Walks" and "Clique" in an all-white ensemble with two bandmates.

Kardashian is expected to spend New Year's Eve at public appearance at a Las Vegas nightclub.

Madonna's MDNA is top-grossing 2012 tour

By RANDY LEWIS
LOS ANGELES TIMES

LOS ANGELES—Madonna was queen of the world in 2012, at least as far as touring pop music performers, delivering the highest-grossing concert tour of the year and raking in nearly \$300 million at the box office worldwide, according to Pollstar, the concert-industry tracking magazine.

Madonna's MDNA tour visited 67 cities for 88 performances that grossed \$296.1 million, an average of \$4.4 million a night, Pollstar's data shows. Her average ticket price was just over \$140, far from the priciest concert tickets of the year.

Bruce Springsteen & the E Street Band came in at No. 2, grossing \$210.2 million from 81 shows in 66 cities on the Wrecking Ball tour. Springsteen sold more tickets than Madonna—nearly 2.3 million to her 2.1 million—but at significantly lower ticket prices. Seats for Springsteen's shows averaged just under \$92.

Third place went to Roger Waters with \$186.4 million, making him the only act in the top 10 most lucrative tours who also made that list last year. Waters jumped up two positions from last year, selling almost 1.7 million tickets and posting an average nightly gross of nearly \$3.9 million during 72 shows in 48 cities.

"Proving there is a global diversity of attractions, only 13 artists from 2011 made this year's top 50," Pollstar Editor Gary Bongiovanni noted in a statement accompanying the magazine's tour report. "It is also worth noting that the global brand strength of Cirque du Soleil has never been greater, with eight different touring shows ranking on the chart."

Coming in behind Waters, Coldplay finished at No. 4 with \$171.3 million, followed by Lady Gaga in fifth place with \$161.4 million.

Pollstar's numbers are close to Billboard's recently published year-end tour tally but reflect some notable differences. Billboard uses a slightly earlier reporting period—Nov. 9, 2011, through Nov. 13, 2012, versus Pollstar's Jan. 1 through Dec. 31 time frame. In addition, Pollstar incorporates projections on shows not reported by promoters to provide a fuller approximation of the actual totals.

Rounding out Pollstar's top 10 were Cirque du Soleil's "Michael Jackson: The Immortal" tour at No. 6 (with a gross of \$140.2 million), Kenny Chesney and Tim McGraw's Brothers of the Sun stadium tour (No. 7, \$96.5 million), Metallica (No. 8, \$86.1 million), Elton John (No. 9, \$69.9 million) and the Red Hot Chili Peppers (No. 10, \$57.8 million).

Chesney and McGraw logged the highest average attendance, playing to 49,336 fans on average during their summer run.

Among other intriguing statistics farther down the year-end tally: Barbra Streisand made the top 25 with 12 concerts in 10 cities, thanks to an average ticket price of \$263.52, giving her a \$40.7-million gross and the No. 22 spot on the list.

But even those numbers pale next to the Rolling Stones, who finished at No. 33 with just five shows in three cities.

'The Hobbit' stays atop box office for third week



AP
This publicity file photo released by Warner Bros., shows the character Gollum voiced by Andy Serkis in a scene from the fantasy adventure "The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey."

LOS ANGELES (AP)—"The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey" continues to rule them all at the box office, staying on top for a third-straight week and capping a record-setting \$10.8 billion year in moviegoing.

The Warner Bros. fantasy epic from director Peter Jackson, based on the beloved J.R.R. Tolkien novel, made nearly \$33 million this weekend, according to Sunday studio estimates, despite serious competition from some much-anticipated newcomers. It's now made a whopping \$686.7 million worldwide and \$222.7 million domestically alone.

Two big holiday movies—and potential Academy Awards contenders—also had strong openings. Quentin Tarantino's spaghetti Western-blaxploitation mash-up "Django Unchained" came in second place for the weekend with \$30.7 million. The Weinstein Co. revenge comedy, starring Jamie Foxx as a slave in the Civil War South and Christoph Waltz as the bounty hunter who frees him and then makes him his partner, has earned \$64 million since its

Christmas Day opening.

And in third place with \$28 million was the sweeping, all-singing "Les Misérables," based on the international musical sensation and the Victor Hugo novel of strife and uprising in 19th century France. The Universal Pictures film, with a cast of A-list actors singing live on camera led by Hugh Jackman, Anne Hathaway and Russell Crowe has made \$67.5 million domestically and \$116.2 worldwide since debuting on Christmas.

Additionally, the smash-hit James

Bond adventure "Skyfall" has now made \$1 billion internationally to become the most successful film yet in the 50-year franchise, Sony Pictures announced Sunday. The film stars Daniel Craig for the third time as the iconic British superspy.

"This is a great final weekend of the year," said Paul Dergarabedian, an analyst for box-office tracker Hollywood.com. "How perfect to end this year on such a strong note with the top five films performing incredibly well."

"Les Misérables" went into its open-

ing weekend with nearly \$40 million in North American grosses, including \$18.2 on Christmas Day. That's the second-best opening ever on the holiday following "Sherlock Holmes," which made \$24.9 million on Christmas 2009. Tom Hooper, in a follow-up to his Oscar-winner "The King's Speech," directs an enormous, ambitious take on the beloved musical which has earned a CinemaScore of "A" from audiences and "A-plus" from women.

Nikki Rocco, Universal's head of distribution, said the debut for "Les Misérables" also beat the studio's expectations.

"That \$18.2 million Christmas Day opening—people were shocked... This is a musical!" she said. "Once people see it, they talk about how fabulous it is."

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Hollywood.com. Where available, latest international numbers are also included. Final domestic figures will be released Monday.

1. **"The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey,"** \$32.9 million (\$106.5 million international).
2. **"Django Unchained,"** \$30.7 million.
3. **"Les Misérables,"** \$28 million (\$38.3 million international).
4. **"Parental Guidance,"** \$14.8 million (\$7 million international).
5. **"Jack Reacher,"** \$14 million (\$18.1 million international).
6. **"This Is 40,"** \$13.2 million.
7. **"Lincoln,"** \$7.5 million.
8. **"The Guilt Trip,"** \$6.7 million.
9. **"Monsters, Inc. 3-D,"** \$6.4 million.
10. **"Rise of the Guardians,"** \$4.9 million (\$11.6 million).

Green Day set to resume tour in 2013

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Green Day is going back on the road.

The Grammy-winning punk band announced new tour dates Monday.

The band canceled the rest of its 2012 club schedule and postponed the start of a 2013 arena tour after singer-guitarist Billie Joe Armstrong's substance abuse problems emerged publicly in September when he had a profane meltdown on the stage of the iHeartRadio Music Festival in Las Vegas. The band's rep announced later that Armstrong was headed to treatment for substance abuse.

"I just want to thank you all for the love and support you've shown for the past few months," Armstrong told fans in a statement Monday. "Believe me, it hasn't gone unnoticed and I'm eternally grateful to have such an amazing set of friends and family. I'm



getting better every day. So now, without further ado, the show must go on."

The tour is scheduled to begin March 28 at the Allstate Arena in the Chicago area. Tickets for postponed shows will be honored on the new dates, and refunds will be available for canceled shows.

"We want to thank everyone for hanging in with us for the last few months," the band said. "We are very excited to hit the road and see all of you again, though we regret having to cancel more shows."

The band released their most recent album, "Tre," on Dec. 11, more than a month ahead of schedule.

In this Sept. 6, 2012 file photo, members of Green Day, from left, Tre Cool, Billie Joe Armstrong and Mike Dirnt attend the MTV Video Music Awards, in Los Angeles. **AP**

'Rings' trilogy sound editor Hopkins dies in NZ

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP)—Oscar-winning sound editor Mike Hopkins, who worked on the "Lord of the Rings" trilogy and other Peter Jackson films, has died in a rafting accident in New Zealand. He was 53.

Hopkins drowned on Sunday when his inflatable raft capsized during a flash flood in a river on New Zealand's North Island, police senior



In this March 5, 2006 file photo, Mike Hopkins, left, and Ethan Van der Ryn pose with the Oscar for achievement in sound editing for their work on "King Kong" at the 78th Academy Awards in Los Angeles. **AP**

Sgt. Carolyn Watson said. His wife survived.

The New Zealand Herald newspaper quoted "Rings" director Peter Jackson as saying many actors, directors and

film crew members who were lucky enough to work with Hopkins would miss him deeply.

"Mike was a very genuine, caring and warm-hearted guy

with a great sense of humor," Jackson said.

A native New Zealander, Hopkins shared Oscars with sound editing partner Ethan Van der Ryn in 2006 for "King Kong" and in 2003 for "The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers." They also were nominated for 2007's "Transformers."

Hopkins also was sound editor on the two other "Rings" films and had worked on earlier Jackson movies including "Heavenly Creatures" and "The Frighteners."

The Herald reported a family celebration of Hopkins' life was planned on Thursday.

A river contractor, Bruce Slater, and his son used a jet boat to rescue Hopkins' wife. Nicci Hopkins had been in the Waiohine River two hours and was clinging to a ledge in a narrow part of the gorge too dangerous for bigger boats or a helicopter.

Watson called the Slaters heroic. Slater told Fairfax New Zealand the flash flood raised the river 2 to 3 meters (9.8 feet) while the rafters were in the water.

"If they'd been half an hour earlier, they would have been clear of the gorge," he said. And a half hour later, the water levels would have been noticeably dangerous before the rafters launched, Slater said.

Comedian Katt Williams arrested in LA

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Katt Williams, the comedian who has repeatedly found himself on the wrong side of the law, is out on bail after being arrested in Los Angeles on suspicion of child endangerment and possession of a stolen gun.

Police Officer Norma Eisenman said Williams was taken into custody Friday after the LA

County Department of Children and Family Services did a welfare check at his home. Authorities found more than one firearm, one of which had been reported stolen.

Eisenman says the DCFS did not specify how many children lived at the



Williams

home or whether they were removed.

The 41-year-old Williams was arrested this month on a felony warrant related to a police chase. In November, he was accused of hitting a man on the head with a bottle during a fight.

Bisexual wife is of two minds about coming out

By **ABIGAIL VAN BUREN**
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: After years of denial I have come to realize that I am bisexual. I'm happily married to a straight man, and we have a great marriage I wouldn't change for the world. He is my soul mate, and we plan to be together for many years to come. I just happen to be physically attracted to women, too.

Some people say I can't be bisexual if I've never been with a woman; I say they're wrong. Am I correct?

How do I deal with this in social situations? I'm afraid to put it on my social media profile for fear of a backlash from my family. I'd like my friends to know, but it doesn't feel proper to just come out and say, "I'm bi."

I was hoping some of your readers might be able to give me some input. How does one "come out" without overdoing it or coming across the wrong way? Is there a right way? Should I continue keeping it a secret?

I'm not sure what to do with my revelation. I have pondered it for some time now, and felt I could trust you to give me tactful, unbiased advice.

BI IN THE DEEP SOUTH

DEAR B.I.T.D.S.: Bisexuality is having an attraction to people of both sexes, and yes, it is possible to be bisexual without having acted upon it.

However, being married means you are (happily) involved in a monogamous relationship. To announce that you are bisexual and/or put it on the Internet would be a mistake, in my opinion, not only because it would shock your family, but also because it might seem like you were advertising that you are "available." Unless you are promiscuous, you are NOT available. Most married people agree to be committed to their spouses regardless of whether they are straight, gay or bi.

If you choose to confide your diverse sexual orientation to your close friends, that is your business. But if you do, please remember that once two people know something, there's a strong likelihood of the news spreading faster than the flu.

P.S. If you do decide to divulge, be sure to tell your husband first.

DEAR ABBY: I work in a jewelry store where the associates get generous discounts. I mentioned the amount of my discount at one family party, and ever since, my brother-in-law has continued to ask to use it for my sister.

Abby, letting others use my discount is strictly forbidden. Although the store may never find out, this goes against my morals.

My sister's birthday is in six weeks, and today I told him we can split the cost for the item she wants. I offered because I felt pressured. I have now decided that I can't go against my morals, plus the item is pretty expensive even with my discount.

How do I tell him no? I have told him before that it's against company policy, but the message isn't getting through.

FEELING USED IN GEORGIA

DEAR FEELING USED: Tell your brother-in-law that even with the discount, splitting the cost of the birthday gift is too much for you. Then reiterate firmly that doing this is against company policy and could cost you your job. It's the truth.

While the conversation may not be pleasant, it's important to deliver the message now so he can make other arrangements to pay for that expensive piece of jewelry your sister is expecting.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

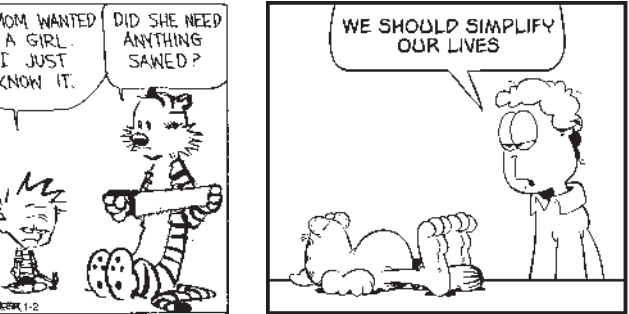
To order "How to Write Letters for All Occasions," send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Letter Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. Shipping and handling are included in the price.

Pastimes

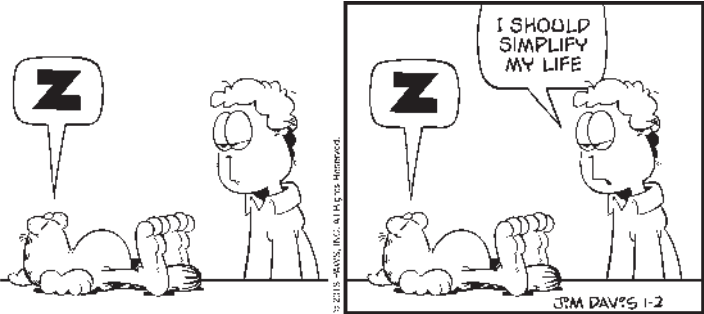
Calvin and Hobbes



Garfield®



By Jim Davis



Adam@home



The Duplex



By Glenn McCoy

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 36 Soothe 38 Tatter 40 Actor 41 A long time 43 Bugging device 45 Tranquil 47 Pencil end 51 Impulse carrier 52 Multiple marriage 54 Expectorate 55 Ailing 56 Malaria symptom 57 Pop 58 Oklaho- ma city 59 Untouch- able Eliot

DOWN 1 Swiss peaks 2 Animated Betty 3 Java neighbor 4 Chihua- hua chum 5 "— a borrower ... 6 Curved path 7 Wide 8 Occur- ring naturally 9 Bikini pattern? 10 Lotion additive 11 Chopped 16 Imple- ment 20 Card game for two 23 Lawyers' org. 24 Scale member 25 Edwin Land's company 27 Rowing need 29 — out a living 30 Primary color 32 Purplish 30-Down 34 Knee- cap 37 Longing 39 Indiana city 42 Brownish tone 44 Heathen 45 Back talk 46 World's fair 48 Wise one 49 Ostriches' kin 50 Deli loaves 53 On in years

Solution time: 21 mins.

Monday's answer 12-31

STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Kate Bosworth, 30; Dax Shepard, 38; Taye Diggs, 42; Cuba Gooding Jr., 45.

Happy Birthday: Embrace the future and concentrate on showing everyone what you are capable of doing. You stand to make financial, contractual and medical gains that will improve your life and your future. Greater responsibility can be expected, giving you a perfect opportunity to take charge and control the way your life will unfold. Creative ideas will be prosperous. Your numbers are 3, 12, 20, 24, 32, 38, 47.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Live in the moment. Strive to be and do your best. Don't let a challenge or opposition spin you in a negative direction. Believe in yourself and your capabilities. Discuss your personal plans and call in a favor that will help you advance. ***

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Consider what you already know and you will make a wise choice regarding what you need to sign up for in order to make the most of the upcoming year. Set goals you feel passionate about achieving but that are also reasonable. *****

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Don't let uncertainty be your downfall. Too many options will lead to confusion. Narrow down your choices based on what you feel comfortable pursuing. Don't take an unnecessary risk. Harness your skills and focus on what you can accomplish. **

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You've got plenty of room to maneuver, so don't hold back. Follow through with your plans and make sure to reach for the stars. Speak openly with

people about your ideas and you will receive the support you require to get started. ****

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Don't sit still when there is so much to do. Partnerships must be nurtured, and if that means a face-to-face talk, be accommodating. Consider how people perceive you and make changes to your image that will make you more engaging. ***

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Listen to someone talking about past experiences. Ask questions and apply the information you receive to something you are trying to accomplish in your life. What you learn now you can apply to what you want to accomplish this year. ***

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): You'll have to juggle a lot if you want to avoid trouble. Gauge your time and focus on what's important to the people you are dealing with. Fairness will play an important role in the outcome of anything you begin today. ***

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Sign up for anything that interests you. This is a learning year and it's best to start gathering information right from the beginning. Greater creativity coupled with discipline, hard work and networking will pay off in the end. Focus on originality and technology. ****

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Take a step back and reflect on what transpired last year. You may have to make some personal adjustments before you can begin to make changes to your personal lifestyle and wellness. Size up your situation and estimate your needs and overhead. **

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Go over ventures and endeavors you want to pursue this year and lay out your game plan. A budget must be put in place that will help you oversee the possibilities allowing you to work within your means. Success is in the stars. *****

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Expect to face setbacks and opposition. Not everyone will be willing to be as impulsive as you. Concentrate on your home and domestic life and how you can improve your situation without going over budget. Creative ideas will win praise. ***

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Greater involvement in an organization that is helping others or fighting for a cause will lead to a contract or opportunity that will bring in more cash. Don't let an emotional or ego problem stand in the way of your success. ***

Birthday Baby: You have drive and charisma. You are intense, strong and relentless.

Eugenia's website—eugenialast.com, Eugenia's android app @ <http://bit.ly/exhoro> and join Eugenia on twitter/facebook/linkedin.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

			3	7	4					
		5				3				
2		1					5			
3		8					1			
1			5				3			
	6				1	8				
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						2	1	6		
						8	7			

Difficulty Level ★★ ★ 1/02

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Monday's SUDOKU Answer

8	6	7	4	1	2	5	3	9
1	5	9	6	7	3	2	4	8
3	2	4	8	9	5	6	7	1
9	4	5	3	6	1	7	8	2
7	8	2	9	5	4	1	6	3
6	3	1	7	2	8	9	5	4
2	7	3	1	4	6	8	9	5
4	1	6	5	8	9	3	2	7
5	9	8	2	3	7	4	1	6

Difficulty Level ★ 12/01

WONDERWORD By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

LIVING HIGH ON THE HOG Solution: 7 letters

O E V A S H E K C O T S A L E
P V P S T S G P R S T E S S A
U I L D S I R B E N E F I T R
L S E N E V A B U D G E T A N
E S N U N A L L O W A N C E I
N E T F U L L C C N H C I R N
C R Y T N U O B A M U S E G G
E P A T H M S W P E E S A N O
S M M E F L A E I A W L I T T
T I L O U I L A T N M A L H S
A P R X N F A L A S G P G O F
T T U I T E R T L O R U L E W
E R O L A G Y H O I O L L E S
Y S R E W A R D C N H T R O W
S G N I V A S E E V R E S E R

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Allowance, Ample, Assets, Benefit, Bonus, Bounty, Budget, Capital, Cent, Comfort, Earning, Enough, Estate, Full, Funds, Gain, Galore, Goods, Great, Help, Impressive, Large, Lavish, Life, Luxury, Means, Mellow, Money, Nest, Opulence, Path, Plenty, Price, Reserve, Reward, Rich, Salary, Sale, Save, Savings, Sell, Stash, Stock, Wages, Wealth, Worth

Yesterday's Answer: Furniture

From THE COLLECTED WONDERWORD Volume 89, #1, #2, #3, #4, #5, #6, #7, #8, #9, #10, #11, #12, #13, #14, #15, #16, #17, #18, #19, #20, #21, #22, #23, #24, #25, #26, #27, #28, #29, #30, #31, #32, #33, #34, #35, #36, #37, #38, #39, #40, #41, #42, #43, #44, #45, #46, #47, #48, #49, #50, #51, #52, #53, #54, #55, #56, #57, #58, #59, #60, #61, #62, #63, #64, #65, #66, #67, #68, #69, #70, #71, #72, #73, #74, #75, #76, #77, #78, #79, #80, #81, #82, #83, #84, #85, #86, #87, #88, #89, #90, #91, #92, #93, #94, #95, #96, #97, #98, #99, #100, #101, #102, #103, #104, #105, #106, #107, #108, #109, #110, #111, #112, #113, #114, #115, #116, #117, #118, #119, #120, #121, #122, #123, #124, #125, #126, #127, #128, #129, #130, #131, #132, #133, #134, #135, #136, #137, #138, #139, #140, #141, #142, #143, #144, #145, #146, #147, #148, #149, #150, #151, #152, #153, #154, #155, #156, #157, #158, #159, #160, #161, #162, #163, #164, #165, #166, #167, #168, #169, #170, #171, #172, #173, #174, #175, #176, #177, #178, 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EMPLOYMENT

(6) Fisherman, (4) Sales Representative, (1) Dive Master. Minimum salary. Send resume to SMJ Corporation, P.O.Box 503944 Saipan MP 96950.

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Sunset View Terraces. Luxury 2BR & 1BTH Apts w/private balcony & beautiful view. Rooms w/ A/C & Fully Furnished. Back-up Generator. Free Wi-Fi. Laundry Area. Nighttime security. \$550. Pls. visit our website www.saipan-properties.com. Call for an appointment 235-6527/28 or 285-1317.

Lower Navy Hill Apts. Newly renovated bldg., 3BR & 2BTH. Rooms w/ A/C & fully furnished. Back-up generator. Free Wi-Fi, EPA Solar Water Heater. Laundry area. Nighttime security. \$450/mo. Call for an appointment 235-6527/28 or 285-1317.

Fina Sisu Apt., 1-BR, 1-BTH, FF, AC, BU Genset/24-hr water, security, laundry room, free Wi-Fi & ample parking. Close to NMC campus. MIHA applicants accepted. \$250/mo. Pls. visit our website www.saipan-properties.com. Call for an appointment 235-6527/8 or 285-1317.

Fina Sisu Apt., 2-BR, 1-BTH, FF, AC, BU Genset/24-hr water, security, laundry room, free Wi-Fi & ample parking. Close to NMC campus. MIHA applicants accepted. \$450-\$550/mo. Pls. visit our website www.saipan-properties.com. Call for an appointment 235-6527/8 or 285-1317.

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Erika's Catering
(3) Cook
Salary \$5.55/hr
2 years work experience.
Willing to work during holidays.
Send your resume at P.O. Box 501728 CK Saipan, MP 96950

JD's Corporation
P.O. Box 502981 Saipan, MP 96950
Vacancy Announcement for US workers'
1 - Store Manager
College graduate. Min. 6 yrs experience.
Salary: \$1,100.00 per month.
Call Mukesh Dejavanani at 235-4405.

Mayflower Corporation
Job Vacancy Announcement
(1) GRAPHIC ARTIST
(1) MANAGER
- Must have at least 3 years work related experience
Applicants may send resume to aolw002@gmail.com or call 888-2885

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT
SALES REPRESENTATIVE
• Must have experience as Sales Representative
• Must have own transportation and driver's license
• Must work flexible hours
• \$5.55/hr
Please submit your resume to System 4U, Saipan or call Maricel B. Sablan at 483-7002

Francisco C. Cabrera dba Design Florist / Cabrera Funeral
Job Vacancy Announcement
Closing Date: January 08, 2013
(1) Admin Assistant & (1) Flower Arranger
• Must have at least 3 yrs experience
• Can work flexible hours
(1) Event Coordinator
• Associates Degree
• Can work flexible hours
Send resume to PO Box 500866 CK Saipan, MP 96950

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HARDT EYE CLINIC is in need of the following:
Registered Nurse/Certified Diabetes Educator
(1) - Assess patient health problems and needs, develop and implement nursing care plans, and maintain medical records. Administer nursing care to ill, injured, convalescent, or disabled patients. May advise patients on health maintenance and disease prevention or provide case management. Provides individualized diabetes self-management education/training to individuals and groups according to the Scope of Practice, Standards of Practice, and Standards of Professional performance for Diabetes Educators (AADE, 2005). **Licensing or registration and certification for Diabetes Educator are required.**

Certified Optician (1) - Cut, grind, and polish eyeglasses, contact lenses, or other precision optical elements. Assemble and mount lenses into frames or process other optical elements. Includes precision lens polishers or grinders, center-edge, and lens mounters. Knowledge of principles and processes for providing customer and personal services. This includes customer needs assessment, meeting quality standards for services, and evaluation of customer satisfaction. Knowledge of arithmetic, algebra, geometry, calculus, statistics, and their applications. **Certification and Advance Certification is required.**

Submit application at **Hardt Eye Clinic, Inc. dba Hardt Eye Clinic; Diabetes Education Center located next to MegaByte, Chalan Laulau, Beach Road, Saipan. Salary commensurate to credentials and qualification.**

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JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT - WINCHELL'S DONUTS

2 vacancies for **Operations Managers**. Wage per hour depends on qualifications. College level, or an equivalent of at least 4-5 years of continued experience in supervising bakery operations. Must know how to operate a cash register or POS system. Must be customer-service oriented. Must be computer literate. Must be confident in doing basic mathematical skills. Able to converse in basic Japanese or other foreign languages highly preferred.

2 vacancies for **Sales Associates**. Wage range \$5.55 to \$5.70 per hour. High school level, or an equivalent of at least 4-5 years of continued experience in sales. Must know how to operate a cash register or POS system. Must be customer-service oriented. Must be computer literate. Must be confident in doing basic mathematical skills. Must be able to read, write and speak basic English. Able to converse in basic Japanese or other foreign languages highly preferred.

6 vacancies for **Donut Makers/Bakers**. Wage range \$5.55 to \$5.70 per hour. High school level, or an equivalent of at least 3 years experience in baking. Knowledge in operating a cash register or POS system preferred. Must be customer-service oriented. Must be able to lift at least 50 lbs. Must be confident in doing basic mathematical skills. Must be able to read, write and speak basic English. Able to converse in basic Japanese or other foreign languages highly preferred.

Additional requirements: All applicants must be of good health and good moral character, must be able to follow grooming standards, must be able to provide current police and court clearance, must be able to obtain health certificate, must have a reliable transportation and must agree to a drug test.

Please get application forms and submit them at our Winchell's Garapan location from 8am to 12 noon or email them to dennys@guam.net

WHATZIT Solution: All in the line of duty

CLASSIFIEDS RATES AND POLICIES

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ADS	(PRINT)	COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
• 3-Liner	\$15	\$30
• 5-Liner	\$24	\$45

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Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

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James, Bosh lead Heat over Magic in OT, 112-110

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP)—LeBron James had 36 points, 11 assists and eight rebounds, and Chris Bosh scored 22 points to help the Miami Heat slip past the Orlando Magic 112-110 in overtime Monday.

James scored eight points in overtime, including two free throws that clinched it with 1.5 seconds left. Dwayne Wade, who had 21 points, had a dunk with 6.2 seconds to go to give Miami a four-point lead.

Arron Afflalo scored 28 points for the Magic and J.J. Redick added 23, but he committed the turnover that led to Wade's decisive dunk. Nikola Vucevic had 20 points and set a team record with 29 rebounds as Orlando lost its sixth straight. The previous record was 28 rebounds by Shaquille O'Neal in 1993.

James scored on a driving layup with 1:07 left in the extra period to give Miami a 108-106 lead. He missed a shot from the top of the key, giving Orlando a chance to tie, but Shane Battier stole a cross-court pass from Redick and fed Wade for his late slam.

Josh McRoberts cut it to two with two seconds to play, but James sealed it at the line.

The first half was a series of momentum swing by both teams, with Miami breaking off a 10-0 run early and Orlando responding with a 12-0 burst in the second quarter. The Magic finished the half on a 21-8 run to take a 54-48 halftime lead.

The back-and-forth play continued in the second half. Miami scored the first seven points to go ahead 55-54 on an 18-foot jumper by James, but the Magic responded with a 13-2 run, punctuated by a 20-foot jumper from the corner by DeQuan Jones to go back in front 67-57.

The Heat scored the last four points of the third quarter and the first nine of the fourth, eventually taking a 79-77 lead on a vicious slam by James with 9:38 left in regulation. Miami forced three turnovers and three missed shots in the 13-0 run.

Redick stopped the rally with back-to-back 3-pointers, which set up a mad dash for the finish line. A 3-pointer by James gave Miami a 91-89 lead, but the Magic went back in front on a three-point play by Afflalo that made it 94-91 with 2:45 left.

Orlando led 99-95 after Vucevic hit a 15-footer with 1:07 to go, but Bosh tied it with back-to-back baskets. The Heat forward had a chance to win it in regulation, but his runner from eight feet hit the side of the basket, sending the game into overtime.

James took on three separate defenders to start the overtime and scored on all three. He hit a runner over Josh McRoberts, a fallaway over Afflalo and was fouled by Vucevic, making both free throws to put Miami up 105-101.



Miami Heat center Chris Bosh (1) drives past Orlando Magic center Nikola Vucevic (9) during the second half of an NBA basketball game in Orlando, Fla., Monday, Dec. 31, 2012. The Heat won 112-110 in overtime.

The Magic fought back again, going ahead 106-105 on a driving layup by Redick. However, Orlando turned it over on its next three possessions, giving Miami the opportunity to regain control.

James and the Heat did, ending a two-game losing streak with solid execution at both ends of the floor in the final minute.

Bobcats 91, Bulls 81

In Chicago, Kemba Walker had 18 points and eight rebounds to help Charlotte end an 18-game losing streak with a win over Chicago.

Gerald Henderson added 16 points and reserve Ben Gordon

had 15 as the Bobcats snapped the second-longest skid in team history. It was their first win in their last 10 road games.

Luol Deng scored 20 points and grabbed 12 rebounds for Chicago. Carlos Boozer also had a double-double with 19 points and 14 boards.

Charlotte fended off several rallies by the Bulls, who never held a lead, to win for the first time since Nov. 24.

Thunder 114, Suns 96

In Oklahoma City, Kevin Durant scored 30 points, and Russell Westbrook returned from a cut above his eye with 24 points, nine assists and seven rebounds

as Oklahoma City beat Phoenix.

Oklahoma City extended its home winning streak to 12 games—the longest in the NBA this season—and won on New Year's Eve for the fifth straight year since the franchise moved from Seattle. The Thunder closed 2012 by winning 15 of their last 17 games.

Luis Scola scored 24 points to lead the Suns, who dropped their sixth straight game overall and seventh consecutive meeting against the Thunder. The Suns haven't beaten Oklahoma City since December 19, 2010.

Spurs 104, Nets 73

In San Antonio, Tony Parker had

20 points and San Antonio Spurs held Brooklyn to only five points in the third quarter in a win over the Nets.

Tim Duncan added 15 points and Nando DeColo had 11, while Kawhi Leonard, Tiago Splitter and Matt Bonner chipped in 10 apiece for San Antonio (25-8), which went 9-0 at home in December.

MarShon Brooks had a season-high 16 points to lead Brooklyn (16-15), which suffered its first loss under interim head coach P.J. Carlesimo. Joe Johnson added 12 points and Brook Lopez had 11, but Deron Williams was held to eight points and one assist.

San Antonio set a franchise low for fewest points by an opponent in a quarter.

Pacers 88, Grizzlies 83

In Indianapolis, Paul George had 21 points, six rebounds and five assists to lead Indiana to a win over Memphis.

DJ Augustin had 17 points and six assists, and David West had 13 points and nine rebounds for the Pacers, who have won five of their last six games.

Zach Randolph had 21 points and 15 rebounds, and Marc Gasol had 13 points for the Grizzlies, who have dropped three of the last four.

West scored the go ahead three throws with 6:09 to play to give the Pacers a 72-71 lead after they trailed by as much as 10 in the second half.

Rockets 123, Hawks 104

In Houston, James Harden had 28 points and Houston rebounded from its worst loss of the season with a win over Atlanta.

The Rockets were coming off a 30-point defeat by Oklahoma City and had allowed at least 120 points in their last two games—both losses. They used a 16-0 run in the second quarter to build a big lead and hold on for the win.

Lou Williams had 21 points for the Hawks, whose winning streak ended at four games.

Houston was up by 15 points in the fourth quarter before Atlanta used a 12-2 run to cut the lead to 102-97 with about five minutes remaining. The Rockets answered with an 8-0 run to regain control.

NHL lockout: Union makes proposal, talks Tuesday



NEW YORK

(AP)—The NHL and the players' association will start the new year right where they ended the old one—at the bargaining table.

The sides got together Monday for the first time since Dec. 13, and the union brought along a counterproposal in response to the 288-page contract offer the NHL presented on Thursday. There were some discussions between the negotiators inside the league's midtown Manhattan headquarters and some time spent apart in internal caucuses.

"This discussion was for us to respond and for them to ask questions and us to explain a number of the points we made," union executive director Donald Fehr said. "We covered the range of subjects that their document included."

After several hours passed, the NHL said it would be going over the players' new contract offer on Monday night and would get back to the union in the morning. Commissioner Gary Bettman said he expected negotiations would restart Tues-

day afternoon.

"There was an opportunity for the players' association to highlight the areas that they thought we should focus on based on their response," Bettman said. "That's something we've now got to look at very closely in addition to the myriad other issues."

Neither side chose to delve into details of what was offered in either of the proposals nor characterize any of the discussions that Fehr said "weren't terribly long."

The fact that neither offer was quickly dismissed could be taken as a positive sign that perhaps the gap has closed between them.

"I'm out of the prediction business," Fehr said. "You get up every day and you try to figure out how to make an agreement that day, and if it fails you try and do it the next day. That's exactly where we are."

Bettman also reserved judgment when asked if progress was made.

"I think it would be premature for me to characterize it and not particularly helpful to the

process," he said.

A crowd of people heading toward New Year's celebrations in New York gathered around the large throng of reporters and television cameras focused in on Bettman and Fehr as the two leaders spoke separately on the busy sidewalk. Clearly, both men would rather have the attention back on the ice instead of themselves.

This was the first meeting in nearly three weeks since the last round of negotiations with a federal mediator on Dec. 13. After presenting their proposal, union representatives stayed in the building in case there were further discussions—later, with talks done for the day, the union said it expected a response from the NHL on Tuesday morning.

The New Year's clock ticked down while the window to reach a labor agreement to save the season was rapidly closing. Bettman said a deal needs to be reached by Jan. 11 to allow the season to begin by Jan. 19.

That leaves a little less than two weeks to reach an agreement and hold one week of training camp before the puck would drop on a

48-game campaign.

So far, a deal has proved elusive and well out of reach.

The league and the union had informational discussions—by conference call and in meetings—with staff members that lasted much of Saturday and ended Sunday. Those talks were spurred by the extensive contract proposal the NHL made on Thursday.

All games through Jan. 14 have been canceled, claiming more than 50 percent of the original schedule.

Bargaining sessions with only the NHL and union hadn't been held since Dec. 6, when talks abruptly ended after the players' association made a counterproposal. The league said that offer was contingent on the union accepting three elements unconditionally and without further bargaining.

The NHL then pulled all existing offers off the table. Two days of sessions with mediators the following week ended without progress.

The NHL is the only North American professional sports league to cancel a season be-

cause of a labor dispute, losing the 2004-05 campaign to a lockout. A 48-game season was played in 1995 after a lockout stretched into January.

It is still possible this dispute could eventually be settled in the courts if the sides can't reach a deal on their own.

The NHL filed a class-action suit this month in U.S. District Court in New York in an effort to show its lockout is legal. In a separate move, the league filed an unfair labor practice charge with the National Labor Relations Board, contending bad-faith bargaining by the union.

Those moves were made because the players' association took steps toward potentially declaring a "disclaimer of interest," which would dissolve the union and make it a trade association. That would allow players to file antitrust lawsuits against the NHL.

Union members voted overwhelmingly to give their board the power to file the disclaimer by Wednesday. If that deadline passes, another authorization vote could be held to approve a later filing.

Reid among 7 NFL coaches sacked in firing frenzy



Quite a day for NFL sacks.

Seven coaches and five general managers were fired Monday in a flurry of pink slips that were delivered the day after the regular-season ended.

There could be more, but so far the sent-packing scorecard looks like this:

Andy Reid in Philadelphia, Lovie Smith in Chicago, and Ken Whisenhunt in Arizona, all coaches who took teams to the Super Bowl, Norv Turner in San Diego, Pat Shurmur in Cleveland, Romeo Crennel in Kansas City and Chan Gailey in Buffalo.

Three teams made it a clean sweep, saying goodbye to the GM along with the coach—San Diego, Cleveland, Arizona. General managers also were fired in Jacksonville and in New York, where Rex Ryan held onto his coaching job with the Jets despite a losing record.

Reid was the longest tenured of the coaches, removed after 14 seasons and a Super Bowl appearance in 2005—a loss to New England.

Smith spent nine seasons with the Bears, leading them to the 2007 Super Bowl—a loss to the Indianapolis Colts.

Turner has now been fired as head coach by three teams. San Diego won the AFC West from 2006-09, but didn't make the postseason the last three years.

"Both Norv and A.J. are consummate NFL professionals, and they understand that in this league, the bottom-line is winning," Chargers President Dean Spanos said in a statement.

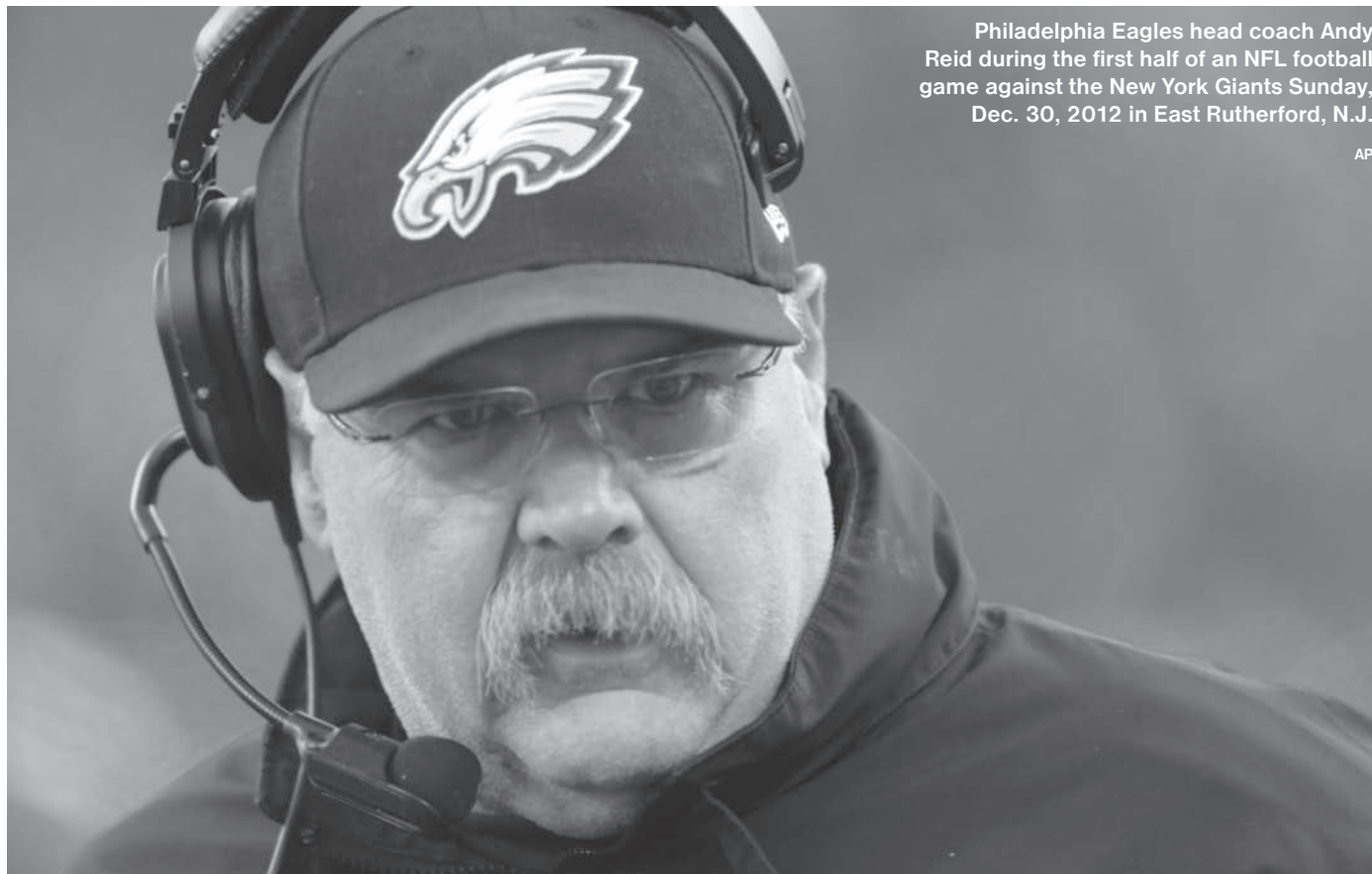
Whisenhunt was fired after six seasons, including taking the Cardinals to a Super Bowl loss to Pittsburgh after the 2008 season. He had more wins than any other coach in Cardinals history, going 45-51, and has one year worth about \$5.5 million left on his contract. GM Rod Graves had been with Arizona for 16 years, nine in his current position. A 5-11 record after a 4-0 start cost him and Whisenhunt their jobs.

Gailey was dumped after three seasons with the Bills; Shurmur after two; and Crennel had one full season with the Chiefs.

Reid took over a 3-13 Eagles team in 1999, drafted Donovan McNabb with the No. 2 overall pick and quickly turned the franchise into a title contender.

He led them to a run of four straight NFC championship games, a streak that ended with a trip to the NFL title game. But the team hasn't won a playoff game since 2008 and after last season's 8-8 finish, owner Jeffrey Lurie said he was looking for improvement this year. Instead, it was even worse. The Eagles finished 4-12.

"When you have a season like that, it's embarrassing. It's personally crushing to me and it's terrible," Lurie said at



Philadelphia Eagles head coach Andy Reid during the first half of an NFL football game against the New York Giants Sunday, Dec. 30, 2012 in East Rutherford, N.J.

AP

a news conference. He said he respects Reid and plans to stay friends with him, "but, it is time for the Eagles to move in a new direction."

Shurmur went 9-23 in his two seasons with the Browns, who will embark on yet another offseason of change—the only constant in more than a decade of futility. Cleveland has lost at least 11 games in each of the past five seasons and made the playoffs just once since returning to the NFL as an expansion team in 1999.

"Ultimately our objective is to put together an organization that will be the best at everything we do," Browns CEO Joe Banner said. "On the field, our only goal is trying to win championships."

Crennel took over with three games left in the 2011 season after GM Scott Pioli fired Todd Haley. Kansas City will have the No. 1 pick in the NFL draft as a result of having one of the worst seasons in its 53-year history. The only other time the Chiefs finished 2-14 was 2008, the year before Pioli was hired.

"I am embarrassed by the poor product we gave our fans this season, and I believe we have no choice but to move the franchise in a different direction," Chiefs chairman Clark Hunt said in a statement.

Gailey, the former Dallas Cowboys coach, compiled a 16-32 record in his three seasons in Buffalo, never doing

better than 6-10.

"This will probably be, and I say probably, but I think it will be the first place that's

ever fired me that I'll pull for," Gailey said.

Smith and the Bears went 10-6 this season and just

missed a playoff spot. But Chicago started 7-1 and has struggled to put together a productive offense throughout

Who might fill the NFL coaching openings?

When NFL coaching jobs open, the names Jon Gruden, Bill Cowher and Tony Dungy immediately surface as potential candidates.

Much more likely than any of those Super Bowl winners returning to the sideline for 2013 would be the hirings of more obscure assistant coaches such as Mike Zimmer, Mike McCoy and Gus Bradley.

And Jon Gruden's younger brother, Jay.

Sure, some of the best-known coaches, including Andy Reid, Lovie Smith and Ken Whisenhunt, who lost their jobs Monday, will be in the mix. So might college coaches Chip Kelly of Oregon and Bill O'Brien of Penn State.

Maybe even Nick Saban, although leaving Alabama for the NFL is a long shot.

Bringing in highly accomplished coordinators has been the most common route for NFL teams lately. Cincinnati's Zimmer and Gruden and Denver's McCoy top most lists, along with Bruce Arians, who went 9-3 as Indianapolis' interim coach this season.

"Obviously, he's earned any

phone call he gets, he's earned that right," Colts coach Chuck Pagano said of Arians, who replaced him for 12 games while Pagano underwent chemotherapy for leukemia. "And let me just say this, we do not want to lose Bruce Arians. We know who he is and what he's meant to this football team ..."

Zimmer was turned down twice last season after interviewing with Tampa Bay, which brought in Rutgers coach Greg Schiano, and Miami (Green Bay offensive coordinator Joe Philbin). The defensive mastermind still wants to be a head coach somewhere, but isn't getting his hopes up.

"Honestly, I don't listen to that stuff anymore," he said in early December. "Honest-to-God's truth. I've had for so many years, have people say, 'This is your year.' Then at the end of the year for about three days I'm totally depressed because I see this guy get a job, that guy get a job, that guy get a job."

"So it's in my best interest not to think about it, talk about it and just try to do the best job I can because I'm like

(everybody else), I get disappointed too."

Gruden, who cut his coaching teeth in Arena Football and has revived Cincinnati's offense around Andy Dalton and A.J. Green, got some interest from other teams after last season. He quickly took himself out of the running, but might get more suitors with seven jobs open.

So might McCoy, whose adaptability is unquestioned after he adjusted Denver's offense for Tim Tebow's skill set last season, then made Peyton Manning's transition from the Colts to the Broncos so smooth.

Arians joined the Colts after he was released as Pittsburgh's offensive coordinator. When Pagano was diagnosed with leukemia, Arians stepped in and guided a team that went 2-14 a year ago into the playoffs.

Bradley has helped Pete Carroll build a physical, sometimes intimidating and always effective defense in Seattle. That style of defense will be attractive to teams such as the Bears, Browns and Eagles who have to deal with cold weather late in the schedule.

Smith's tenure. His record was 81-63 with the Bears, and he took them to one Super Bowl loss and to one NFC championship game defeat.

Receiver and kick return standout Devin Hester was bitter about Smith's firing.

"The media, the false fans, you all got what you all wanted," Hester said as he cleared out his locker. "The majority of you all wanted him out. As players we wanted him in. I guess the fans—the false fans—out-ruled us. I thought he was a great coach, probably one of the best coaches I've ever been around."

The fired GMs included Mike Tannenbaum of the Jets; Gene Smith of the Jaguars; A.J. Smith of the Chargers and Tom Heckert of the Browns and Graves of Arizona.

"You hope that those guys that obviously were victims of black Monday land on their feet," Rams coach Jeff Fisher said. "You've got guys that have been to Super Bowls and won championship games and all of a sudden they've forgot how to coach, I guess."

Kelly is one of the most intriguing candidates. The NFL is loath to admit it is enamored of anything college teams do, but Kelly's wide-open, speed-based offense has lots of pro franchises salivating.

He has been mentioned for most NFL openings, and that figures to continue.

Retreads also will get interviews, and not only the coaches who were canned on Monday. Denver defensive coordinator Jack Del Rio and Atlanta DC Mike Nolan might have earned another chance.

"When you're a young guy and you haven't been there, the urgency and desire to get that opportunity is such that you'd take just about any job given to you," said Del Rio, who was in charge in Jacksonville for nine seasons. "I don't feel that way now. If there's something that fits and the right situation comes along, so be it. But in the meantime, I'm all in, 100 percent as a lieutenant on this staff. I'm somebody that John Fox, John Elway ... and the players can count on. I'm 100 percent invested in helping them be their best." (AP)

After prison release, Urbina returns to baseball



CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)—Former

major league pitcher Ugueth Urbina returned to baseball Friday after serving 7 1/2 years in prison for the attempted murder of five workers on his family's ranch.

Before taking the field in his native Venezuela to play for the Lions of Caracas, Urbina

described himself as "more mature" and said he was "very excited to play baseball again."

"I'm excited to be here," Urbina told reporters at the University Stadium in Caracas, where the Lions played the Zulia Eagles.

The 38-year-old pitcher was released from prison Sunday after serving roughly half of his

14-year sentence for attempted murder during a dispute over a gun on Oct. 16, 2005.

Urbina was found guilty of attacking and injuring workers with a machete. Several other men participated in the attack at his family's ranch, located about 25 miles from Caracas.

Urbina, who pitched for the Montreal Expos, Boston Red

Sox, Texas Rangers, Florida Marlins, Detroit Tigers and Philadelphia Phillies, has repeatedly denied involvement with the incident that landed him in prison, saying he was sleeping at the time of the attack.

A two-time All-Star, Urbina saved 237 big league games from 1995-2005. He had two saves in the 2003 World Series

to help the Marlins beat the New York Yankees, and last pitched in the majors with the Phillies in 2005.

Urbina told reporters he hopes to play professional baseball in the United States again.

"The first order of business is pitching in Venezuela," he said.

Basketball resumes this weekend in Garapan

By **WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND**
walter_sutherland@sapantribune.com
REPORTER

With the holiday break coming to an end, the 3rd Blue Haus Invitational Basketball League plans to resume this Friday evening with the start up of the 3rd QQ Car Rental Basketball Cup season commencing the following day at Garapan Basketball Court.

This Friday’s Blue Haus matchups feature San Antonio taking on Maplas Ka

Money at 6pm followed by Hibiscus versus Yuman Construction at 8pm.

Then on Saturday the R-Rebels take on Sun Palace at 6pm after which Team Capalad squares off with the Bandits at 8pm with Dexter Team set to take on Cargo Express Sunday evening at 8pm.

The QQ Cup chain of events

begins Saturday evening at 5:30pm with the parade of teams followed by the raffle drawing that will determine takes on the two-time defending champions of Mobil. The late feature pairing will also be randomly selected.

Awards for best uniforms and best muse will also be announced during the opening procession.

Jason Tarkong, Andrea Hofschneider, Anthony Sablan, and Patrick Demapan. More Cowbells Please members included Natalie Hill, Jake Van Dam, Steven Johnson, Christen Steinkuller, and Maziyar Ahmadi.

Other finishers in the team event were DFS 1 and 2 (2:02:16), The Guardians (2:09:15), and Raindeer Games (2:12:53). Ben Babauta led DFS’ two squads, while the Guardians had Noah Camacho, Teresa Kim-Tenorio, Robert Torres, Lynn Tenorio, and 9-year-old Lenosuke Suzuki as members. Running for Raindeer Games were Shelly

In addition to Mobil, the other competing squads include Proa, KB Market, Kentucky Fried Chicken/Taco Bell; of San Antonio, the Aces, and a Blue Haus squad.

Though there are only six teams in the field, it is an open league and all groups are expected to be very strong.

The Top 3 teams will all win trophies with a \$1,000 grand prize going to the last team standing; other individual

Scott, Nicole Driscoll, Brian Flaherty, Victoria Chentsova, and Nadeah Vali.

In the solo division, Florence Antonio made it to the finish line first at the 2:02:28 mark, while Roy Ortizo and Jennifer Young came in at second and third after logging 2:05:41 and 2:29:44, respectively. Doug Hartig and Adam Hardwicke rounded out the solo finishers as both runners clocked in at 2:45:16.

The finishers’ times this year were slower than last year because the course was a bit damp with intermittent rain falling on the duration of the race. *(Saipan Tribune)*

awards will also be issued.

Following the season opener, QQ Cup games will continue on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.

For more information, contact QQ Car Rental’s James Han at 483-8866 or Marlon Sison marlon.sison@winchellsguam.com, or call 989-6274.

SHANE

From Page 28

Young Manamko before finally controlling the race on the road up to the former Nikko Hotel in as Matuis.

Shane and the Cool Guys made it to the finish line about two minutes ahead of Young Manamko, which submitted 1:38:32. Siblings Michael and Matthew Mancao led the Young Manamko and teamed up with Noel Altamirano, Mark Isip, and Fred Camacho.

The Ketson “Jack” Kabiriell Safety first came in at third after logging 1:38:47. Join-

ing Kabiriell on the squad were James Lee, Amy Sletten, Jerry Diaz, and Banny Younis.

Three other teams completed the annual race under the two-hour mark with Dark Horse clocking in at 1:40:46, More Cowbells Please posting 1:44:01, and Rudolph Rowdy Reindeer recording 1:54:04.

Dark Horse, which was one of the two teams that completed the race wearing the Let’s Get Fit CNMI shirt, had Soledad Tenorio, Pat Alepuyo, Jose Quan, Solvi Villanueva, and In Bum Choo as members. Dark Horse’s sister quad, Rudolph Rowdy Reindeer was composed of Joey Tudela,

TRENCH

From Page 28

rise from the ashes,” stated Alvarez in an email this past weekend.

The fire destroyed almost everything in the group’s old gym, located in San Antonio, but they managed to salvage a few important things such as the octagon and some small mats.

On looking forward, Alvarez added, “Our plan for 2013, and always, is to try and do better than the last event and bring in higher caliber talent/fighters to our MMA events to compete against out local all stars. This will help us gain an awareness of where we are and what we need to work on to get better. We are always striving to improve and there is always room for improvement.”

Some other positives to take out of 2012 included Alvarez’s son Shane “Pika-Boo” Alvarez venturing over to the U.S. mainland to take his MMA and Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu career to the next level at the Master Lloyd Irvin MMA Academy and Cuki Alvarez himself sweeping gold in September’s Guam Masters Games BJJ competition.

On evaluating where the CNMI currently stands against other Pacific prides, Alvarez shared, “The CNMI athletes have come a long way in their training and preparation for any type of competition in the region. I think it’s only a matter of time before we start not only winning and beating our foes from other places, but winning consistently and more often. We are going in the right direction towards the winner’s circle in 2013 because of our

drive and determination.

Notably, Trench Tech’s Mylo Lassiter (6-1), Josh “Chaos” Duenas (3-4), Fasi “Quick Draw” Jesse (lightweight/9-5) and Mark “The Dark” Nuique (bantamweight) all entered into Guam’s rival entity, Pacific Xtreme Combat, this year, but none of them brought home the bacon.

“Still, they gained invaluable experience and grew as fighters,” stated Alvarez, “Let’s not forget that the PXC is the premier MMA event in the Marianas and the Philippines, meaning all the fighters are tough.”

Evidence of the Trench Tech foursome learning from their losses is apparent as all have stayed active and won fights. Lassiter and Duenas were recently proclaimed as Trench Tech’s inaugural heavyweight and flyweight champions, re-

spectively, in Trench Warz 16: Fire Power! just a couple of weekends ago.

Lassiter has actually already received the call back from PXC and will appear this coming March against his toughest opponent yet in former champion Roque Martinez (5-4 with a draw) out of Spike 22. Duenas notched a nice win over PXC-veteran Dylan Pablo (4-2), of the Tiyan Tough Walkers, and his fingers are crossed for a second chance in the 671.

As for Trench Tech’s 2013 lineup, its tentative event dates list Rites of Passage 14: Mayhem! for April 5; The Art of War 8 Grappling/Submission Challenge slated for June 14; Rites of Passage 15: Wrath of the Warrior! on Aug. 9; and Trench Warz 17: Champion! scheduled on Dec. 13.

Meanwhile, the third and final round of the three-round robin tournament started last Sunday and results of the two games will be reported in *Saipan Tribune’s* Thursday edition.

First Game

Swerve 51 – K. Lebria 23, Pena 12, Williams 10, Alegre 4, Che 2, Reyes 2.

Team Four 45 – Castillo 22, Abrams 21, Sapong 2.

Scoring by quarters: 11-14, 19-22, 34-35, 51-45.

Second Game

Air Apparent 42 – Pagarao 17, Ito 11, Javier 6, Gatchalian 4, Santiago 2.

Team Go So Hard 34 – I. Palero 23, Diaz 4, Echavez 3, Lizardo 2, Cristobal 2.

Scoring by quarters: 8-13, 20-21, 36-31, 42-34.

SWERVE

From Page 28

then slowly picked up the scoring for Swerve, making three triples to move her team within three, 11-14.

Team Four was then down to four players in the closing minutes of the second with Mikky Vargas surprisingly leaving the game for unknown reasons, but Abrams and Castillo kept the squad on top at halftime, 22-19.

The match remained close at the end of the third with Team Four hanging on to a 35-34 before Swerve got into its senses in the fourth and avoided an upset against its depleted foe.

Five different players scored for Swerve in the payoff canto and four nailed at least two baskets apiece, while only Abrams

and Castillo contributed for the slumping Team Four.

Lebria paced Swerve with her 23 points, 15 of them came from the 3-point area, while Friendly Joy Pena and Lily Williams chipped in 12 and 10, respectively, despite reporting late for the game.

Castillo had 22 for Team Four, while Abrams added 21. Reylyn Sapong scored the other 2 points for Team Four.

In the second game Air Apparent held Team Go So Hard without a field goal in the fourth quarter to post a 42-34 victory.

Team Go So Hard scored only three points in the crucial fourth canto off Patricia Echavez’s free throws.

Actually, baskets were hard to come by for both teams in the fourth with Air Apparent scoring only 6 points, but it built



ASTIG

From Page 28

first of the double-round tournament and their team gave up 19 goals in three games.

Fake Madrid logged the most goals in the first round with its 13. It also kept the No. 1 spot despite the draw against San Antonio Footloose, as Fake Madrid earned 7 points against Astig Futsal’s 6 in the first round.

San Antonio collected 4 points and posted 6 goals after the first three games. It also allowed 6 goals. Bernadette Heras nailed San Antonio’s only goal in last Saturday’s game. Also on the San

Antonio Footloose roster are Christian Castro, Mareko Tekpua, Jherico Tiamzon, Thaiphi Austria, J.M. Rojas, Skyler Secharmedal, Mia Carreon, Charizama Aragon, Nicolas Tkel, James Garcia, and Dave Tanghal.

Fake Madrid’s 13th goal came from Guineverre Borja, who has Sunjoon Tenorio, Logan Mister, Edwin Kim, Bradley Camacho, Clayton Izuka, and Lyka Sally as teammates.

Meanwhile, the second round of the co-ed tournament starts today with San Antonio Footloose taking on Astig Futsal at 5:30pm and Fake Madrid colliding against Spencer United at 6:15pm. *(Saipan Tribune)*



TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
New York	21	9	.700—	
Brooklyn	16	15	.516 5½	
Boston	14	16	.467 7	
Philadelphia	14	17	.452 7½	
Toronto	11	20	.355 10½	

Southeast Division

Miami	21	8	.724—	
Atlanta	19	10	.655 2	
Orlando	12	19	.387 10	
Charlotte	8	23	.258 14	
Washington	4	24	.143 16½	

Central Division

Indiana	18	13	.581—	
Chicago	16	13	.552 1	
Milwaukee	16	13	.552 1	
Detroit	11	22	.333 8	
Cleveland	7	25	.219 11½	

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

San Antonio	25	8	.758—	
Memphis	19	9	.679 3½	
Houston	17	14	.548 7	
Dallas	12	19	.387 12	
New Orleans	7	23	.233 16½	

Northwest Division

Oklahoma City	24	6	.800—	
Denver	17	15	.531 8	
Minnesota	14	13	.519 8½	
Portland	15	14	.517 8½	
Utah	15	17	.469 10	

Pacific Division

L.A. Clippers	25	6	.806—	
Golden State	21	10	.677 4	
L.A. Lakers	15	15	.500 9½	
Sacramento	11	19	.367 13½	
Phoenix	11	21	.344 14½	

NBA LEADERS

Scoring

	G	FG	FT	PTS	AVG
Bryant, LAL	30	309	220	903	30.1
Anthony, NYK	24	235	152	684	28.5
Durant, OKC	29	266	241	824	28.4
Harden, HOU	29	222	254	755	26.0
James, MIA	28	285	117	726	25.9
Westbrook, OKC	29	217	147	622	21.4
Aldridge, POR	27	229	112	570	21.1
Wade, MIA	24	185	111	488	20.3
Lee, GOL	31	260	102	622	20.1
Curry, GOL	31	215	99	621	20.0
Pierce, BOS	30	197	148	598	19.9
Ellis, MIL	29	211	122	570	19.7
Parker, SAN	30	225	113	577	19.2
Holiday, PHL	27	201	71	502	18.6
Lillard, POR	29	184	97	532	18.3
Mayo, DAL	31	200	97	568	18.3
Gay, MEM	26	182	82	474	18.2
DeRozan, TOR	31	210	129	565	18.2
Walker, CHA	30	200	106	542	18.1
Bosh, MIA	27	181	115	483	17.9

FG Percentage

	FG	FGA	PCT
Chandler, NYK	144	209	.689
Jordan, LAC	124	209	.593
McGee, DEN	146	249	.586
Howard, LAL	186	325	.572
Ibaka, OKC	173	306	.565
Lopez, NOR	149	266	.560
Hickson, POR	146	262	.557
James, MIA	285	520	.548
Bosh, MIA	181	333	.544
Griffin, LAC	225	416	.541

Rebounds

Varejao, CLE	25	138	223	361	14.4
Randolph, MEM	27	127	208	335	12.4
Howard, LAL	30	111	244	355	11.8
Asik, HOU	30	95	254	349	11.6
Hickson, POR	28	116	193	309	11.0
Lee, GOL	31	94	247	341	11.0
Noah, CHI	28	102	194	296	10.6
Chandler, NYK	30	128	179	307	10.2
Faried, DEN	32	130	194	324	10.1
Jefferson, UTA	31	66	245	311	10.0

Assists

Rondo, BOS	26	302	11.6
Paul, LAC	31	292	9.4
Holiday, PHL	27	240	8.9
Vasquez, NOR	30	264	8.8
Westbrook, OKC	29	251	8.7
Williams, Bro	29	225	7.8
Calderon, TOR	31	236	7.6
Parker, SAN	30	220	7.3
Lawson, DEN	32	221	6.9
Nelson, ORL	22	151	6.9

NFL STANDINGS (FINAL)

AMERICAN CONFERENCE

East

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
y-New England	12	4	0	.750	557	331
Miami	7	9	0	.438	288	317
N.Y. Jets	6	10	0	.375	281	375
Buffalo	6	10	0	.375	344	435

South

y-Houston	12	4	0	.750	416	331
x-Indianapolis	11	5	0	.688	357	387
Tennessee	6	10	0	.375	330	471
Jacksonville	2	14	0	.125	255	444

North

y-Baltimore	10	6	0	.625	398	344
x-Cincinnati	10	6	0	.625	391	320
Pittsburgh	8	8	0	.500	336	314
Cleveland	5	11	0	.313	302	368

West

y-Denver	13	3	0	.813	481	289
San Diego	7	9	0	.438	350	350
Oakland	4	12	0	.250	290	443
Kansas City	2	14	0	.125	211	425

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

East

y-Washington	10	6	0	.625	436	388
N.Y. Giants	9	7	0	.563	429	344
Dallas	8	8	0	.500	376	400
Philadelphia	4	12	0	.250	280	444

South

y-Atlanta	13	3	0	.813	419	299
Carolina	7	9	0	.438	357	363
New Orleans	7	9	0	.438	461	454
Tampa Bay	7	9	0	.438	389	394

North

y-Green Bay	11	5	0	.688	433	336
x-Minnesota	10	6	0	.625	379	348
Chicago	10	6	0	.625	375	277
Detroit	4	12	0	.250	372	437

West

y-San Francisco	11	4	1	.719	397	273
x-Seattle	11	5	0	.688	412	245
St. Louis	7	8	1	.469	299	348
Arizona	5	11	0	.313	250	357

x-clinched playoff spot

y-clinched division

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MP United Football Club Camp

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS/SAIPAN TRIBUNE



Participants in the MP United Club Camp and PH Homeless World Cup Team coach Rudy del Rosario, standing left, pose for a group photo at the completion of the two-weeklong event at the Oleai Sports Complex last month.



Youth players get ready to start the afternoon session of the December soccer camp.



PH Homeless World Cup Team coach Rudy del Rosario, left, receives a plaque of appreciation from MP United U18 coach Norman del Rosario.



PH Homeless World Cup Team coach Rudy del Rosario watches players execute a play.



Two MP United players participate in a drill.



PH Homeless World Cup Team coach Rudy del Rosario, right, gestures to U18 players, while MP United's Enrico del Rosario prepare for the next play.



MP United's Jehn Joyner, left, performs dribbling skills, while PH Homeless World Cup Team coach Rudy del Rosario gives pointers.



Players run both offensive and defensive plays based on PH Homeless World Cup Team coach Rudy del Rosario's instructions.



Kenneth Domingo takes his turn to practice PH Homeless World Cup Team coach Rudy del Rosario's triangle offense.



Players line-up for the triangle offense drill.

James, Bosh lead Heat over Magic in OT, 112-110

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Saipan Tribune Sports

Reid among 7 NFL coaches sacked in firing frenzy

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28 WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 2, 2013

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Shane and the Cool Guys tops Island Relay



Rain falls as participants in the 31st Annual Christmas Island Relay pose for a group photo last Sunday at the Last Command Post.

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Shane and the Cool Guys ruled the 31st Annual Christmas Island Relay held last Sunday, besting nine other squads.



The winning team was composed of Ronald Villafria, Noni Eugenio, Shane Fabiana, and Charlie Sendin and it completed the 13.7-mile race from the Pacific Islands Club in San Antonio to the Last Command Post in Marpi in 1:36:45. Shane and the Cool Guys was the only four-person squad in the field, as its fifth member (Nap Di-

zon) opted to bike rather than do the early morning race.

Villafria started the race, followed by Sendin, Eugenio, and Fabiana. Runners switched after one mile and Shane and the Cool Guys traded leads with the

See SHANE on Page 26

Astig Futsal edges Spencer United



Astig Futsal closed out the first round of the SSS U12 Co-ed Christmas Futsal Tournament with a 2-1 win over Spencer United last Saturday at the TSL Sports Complex.

With the victory, the Jerishwin Angeles-coached Astig Futsal improved its record to 2-0-1 (win-draw-loss) and moved up to second place behind the unbeaten Fake Madrid (2-1-0), which drew San Antonio Footlose (1-1-1) in the other match last weekend. Spencer United is at the bottom of the team standings with its 0-0-3 card.



SAIPAN TRIBUNE

The Astig Futsal goalie goes for a save during their game against Spencer United in the U12 co-ed futsal tournament at the TSL Sports Complex last Saturday.

Louie Calayag and David Mafnas scored one goal apiece in Astig Futsal's second victory, bringing the team's goal scored total after three games to 12. Joining Mafnas and Calayag on the squad are Emmanuel Aniana, De Jana Muna, Diana Maniacop, Jerlyn Castillo, Christopher Aninzo, Jether Yobech, and Angel Sally.

Cody Leon drilled the lone goal for Spencer United, which also has Spencer Dickinson, Eunsyu Hahn, Hana Mafnas, Kelsey Conlon, Carla Ballesteros, Emalyn Aniana, and Marcielyn Welsen as members.

Leon was the only Spencer United player to score in the

See ASTIG on Page 26

Swerve sweeps second round



SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Swerve's Friendly Joy Pena, left, and Team Four's Rachel Abrams battle for the ball during the second quarter of their game in the Kanoa Resort holiday caging last Saturday at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium.



Swerve saved its perfect record in the second round of the 2012 Kanoa Resort Christmas Basketball Tournament after defeating Team Four, 51-45, last Saturday at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium.

Swerve recovered from a slow start to notch its sixth win in as many games and hand

Team Four (1-5) its fifth loss in a row. Swerve also capitalized on Team Four's lack of manpower in the second half to extend its streak.

Team Four had only five players at the start of the game, but led at 8-0 behind the 4 points apiece of Rachel Abrams and Jeralyn Castillo. Kaylani Lebria

See SWERVE on Page 26

Trench Tech reflects on rising from the ashes

By **WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND**
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REPORTER

Trench Tech Purebred's Cuki Alvarez took a moment to reflect on a trying year for the local mixed martial arts scene following a dreadful blaze that burned down the organization's gym and nearly everything in it last Feb. 9.

The group wasted no time dusting itself off and immediately began rebuilding by coming together during the cleanup and relocating processes.

"The start of 2012 was very tough and hard when we lost our gym. It was something that you never really expect or prepare for so we just had to rally together as a team and figure out how to overcome the situation. It's so amazing how human ingenuity comes together during tough times such as this and how we are able to think together as a team and find answers to our problem. The fire only burned our determination and conviction to rebuild and

See TRENCH on Page 26



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Trench Tech's Cuki Alvarez, left, conducts the weigh-in for Trench Warz 16: Fire Power! at Joe's Steakhouse in Garapan earlier this month.